

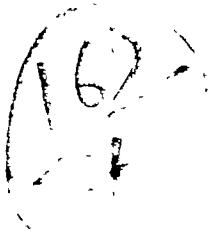
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VOL VII NO 1

1971-72

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OF
THE DEPARTMENT
OF
ENGLISH



CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

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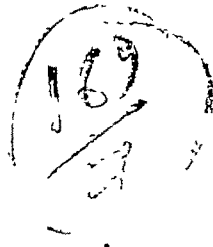


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WIT AND SHAKESPEARE

P. K. MITRA

Like all anecdotes those about Shakespeare's witticism may or may not be founded on fact, but there can be little doubt about the high merit of the wit which his works amply demonstrate. If Fuller's account is any guide, many were the wit-battles between him and Ben Jonson in which Shakespeare would invariably outwit his opponent as nimbly as the English galley that had defeated the Spanish Armada. And yet critical attention paid to his wit in relation to the plays he wrote, has been comparatively inadequate. When other aspects of his dramatic language have been explored with much enthusiasm, this insufficiency seems somewhat curious.

Looking back, one would remember Dryden not so much for his remarks about Shakespeare's wit in particular—for indeed he has said little about it—as for his very illuminating observations on witticism in general, for which, of course, his many Prefaces are an excellent repository. Even the very word 'witticism', interestingly, was coined by him. Dr. Johnson's 'fatal Cleopatra' earned a notoriety that did not quite die with Coleridge's defence of Shakespeare's pun in his many lectures. Why the pun should be repugnant to him and not appear as a delectable dramatic means is something of a puzzle. An easy answer would be ascribing it to his attitude to language—an attitude typical of the Augustans, almost religiously disciplined—were we not familiar with other critics like Walter White,¹ and Kellett (Suggestions 1923) in the present century, who have endorsed this view of Johnson on Shakespeare without, however, fully sharing his linguistic predilections.² It was for Coleridge, who comes in handy for any critical assessment of Shakespeare, to give his pun its due importance and to show that 'the fatal Cleopatra' of Johnson far from being fatal was for Shakespeare truly a lucky angel. But the attempt of Coleridge was half-hearted though no doubt it has considerably influenced some of the modern critics of Shakespeare. Among those of the twentieth century who have specially acclaimed Shakespeare's wordplay are Cleanth Brooks³, F. P. Wilson,⁴ William Empson⁵, Kenneth Muir⁶ and M. M. Mahood.⁷ But since the pun is not the sole constituent of wit, its other components should not also pass unnoticed. Concerning his

puns, I would like in this study to show how Shakespeare puts them—specially the less difficult ones—to finer and more significant uses in his maturer plays, his tragedies in particular, as he develops as an artist, and how he has consciously endeavoured to make them a part of his poetic device as well as linguistic forte. Then I propose to consider a few other types of wit used by him, how they are unique and in what ways they have enriched his art.

A satisfying definition of wit is not easy, although one knows almost for certain what passes for wit. 'Pun, half pun, assonance, epigram (in the modern sense) and distorted quotations are all witty.' So are sharp antithesis, quick repartees, short parodies and, of course, conceits. Since this paper is to treat Shakespeare's verbal wit, I find Matteo Pellegrini of Bologna (1650) on the whole acceptable when he defines wit as 'that part of the soul which in a certain way practises, aims, and seeks to find and create the beautiful and the efficacious,'⁸ but he is certainly more than merely good when he considers the work of wit to be the 'conceits' and 'subtleties,'⁹ I should without doubt reject Emmanuele Tessaro as soon as he in his enthusiasm begins to descant upon "symbolic" and "figurative" conceits (statues, hieroglyphs, emblems, etc.) as forming wit.¹⁰ I would regard neither the trick with which Beatrice and Benedick are brought close to each other nor Hamlet's 'mouse-trap' device as constituting wit. For my purpose wit is something verbal affording intellectual satisfaction by the unexpected association of apparently unconnected ideas, some point of similarity, being realized with a shock of surprise. F. L. Lucas's definition—'a clever saying with a playful tinge'—is even more helpful, since more comprehensive. Wit, as he further explains in his *Literature and Psychology*, Ch. IX, is a kind of 'extempore artistry, employing many devices—epigrammatic brevity, symbolism, allusiveness, ambiguity, comparison; and all this with a nuance of comedy.' The playful tinge in a Shakespearean tragedy may infuse a new tone, and unless the situation in the play were different it could imaginatively serve as a link between his tragedy and comedy. Lamb has said somewhere that to appreciate wit we must take into consideration the totality of time and place. In tragedy wit does seldom cause any laughter, but it can be highly dramatic—bringing into light an unknown trait of a character, deepening an atmosphere and heightening a tense moment or making a point of dramatic irony. In Shakespeare's comedies, however, wit is always titillating, more often than not a weapon in amorous encounter. Bergson and Freud are of little help in explaining Shakespeare's wit, but Freud's classification of wit into (a) Harmless and (b) Tendentious kinds¹¹ is

significant. The first is applicable specially to those Elizabethan comedies classed as 'sweet' and the second to those termed 'bitter.' Wit depending on a mere combination of words may at times be dramatically effective indeed, but where it is based on a combination of ideas its impact is dramatically even more satisfactory. At this stage Coleridge's distinction between wit and fancy may be relevant. "When the whole pleasure received is derived from surprise at an unexpected turn of expression, then I call it wit; but when the pleasure is produced not only by surprise, but also by an image which remains with us and gratifies for its own sake, then I call it fancy".¹⁷ In Shakespeare there is happy blend of fancy and wit—a quality very important in the sense that it has made his wit not a thing apart from his poetic drama, but a component of it. In close proximity of the pun is conceit remarkable for its various dramatic uses in Shakespeare. Also remarkable is the way in which the longer conceits of the early plays have been changed by him later into pithy conceited statements of considerable dramatic import. A conceit, Elizabethan or metaphysical, is a subtly framed image, based simultaneously on a number of 'predicaments' or common places in logic, having a particular character formally distinguishable, allied to certain types of function and stylistically very striking. The formal defining element in any conceit, as Rosemond Tuve points out, is the 'use of *multiple logical bases*: upon all of which the comparison obtains'.¹⁸ Ambiguity, wit's well-head, has been put to use by Shakespeare in a number of ways. Shakespeare's wit is easily distinguished from his contemporaries' since his is more often than not a product of the combination of a resemblance of ideas and a resemblance of words—the kind Cowley would call 'Mixed Wit'. Also, occasionally wit emanates from a nice opposition of ideas as in euphuism which Shakespeare never quite forsakes or from such ingenious expression as 'heart of fire', 'breast of snow' *et cetera*. To an Elizabethan or a metaphysical poet turning a lyrical hyperbole into a fine piece of witticism was never very exacting; and as for Shakespeare, he did it ever so felicitously.

It is difficult to ascertain how much of this intellectual suppleness Shakespeare owed to his reading of Plautus and Terence, and how much to other writers, but it is certain that the measure of his debt to them is very limited. Unquestionably his genius here, as in sundry other respects, is more a product of the popular national spirit behind him than anything else. John Lyly, of course, is a profound influence; the witty parodying of his euthuistic style in *Henry IV* in fact shows the fascination it exercised on him. In the core of his most courtly wit is often Lyly, but the simpler witticisms of the rustics are in line

with the earlier native tradition. If the early plays of Shakespeare abound in simple puns, one likely reason for this could be Shakespeare's intention to feed a new found craze for wit-battles among the Elizabethans, supposedly a body of discerning people who were keenly appreciative of their dramatic role. Shakespeare knew the works of George Puttenham in which is found a story, supporting the pun's efficacy, of how one Polemon desirous of kingly favour was advised by a courtier Philino through a pun. Gifted as he was with a beautiful daughter he should not encounter any difficulty in getting his wish fulfilled. Philino told :

Your best way to worke, and mark my words well,

Not money ; nor many ;

Nor any ; but any ;

Not weemen ; but weemen bear the bell.

Puttenham's own analysis of the puns used by Philino may be quoted. "Subtlety lay in the accent and Orthographie of the two words any and weemen, for any being devided sounds a nie or neere person to the king, and weemen being devided sounds wee—men and weemen and so by this mean Philino served all turns and shifted himself from blame."¹⁴ Polemon profited by his advice. The pun on 'women' is quite frequent in Gascoigne. Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost* uses it dramatically and with zest in his argument against celibacy and in support of love, the role of which, unless it is too ethereal, is to perpetuate human race.

For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love,

Or for love's sake, a word that loves all men,

Or for men's sake the authors of these women ;

Or women's sake, by whom we men are men,

Let us lose our paths to find ourselves. (L.L L.IV, iii)

Love's Labour's Lost, with many Lylian accents, partly for thematic exigency and partly for displaying wit for its own sake, has in it a series of finely devised comic situations in which a group of young ladies and a group of young gallants are seen engaged in lively wit-combats. The play shows the lines along which Shakespeare develops, specially in relation to his comedies. Berowne's persuasive 'Light, seeking light, doth light of light beguile' changes into Othello's 'Put out the light, and then put out the light' in a very tense moment. This is to cite only one instance. If the early plays of Shakespeare are the works of a conscious apprentice essaying perfection, the puns there are also like a tuning-exercise, later modulated into excellent finesse and applied with nice and instinctive discrimination to his great dramas.

It is evident from his later plays on graver subjects that the complicated feelings in a particular situation may be with facility expressed through a pun, if he uses one, with multiple shades of meaning. In a case like this the preponderance of a pun's secondary meaning is in due proportion to the play's controlling idea. Where a pun of this nature occurs, it almost invariably comes to the author in a process not unlike that in which a poetic image forms in him. He hits it off unconsciously or half consciously. But the process is the end-product of his earlier efforts to attain this stage in which the pun not only emphasizes the dominant idea of a play, but also becomes an exact equivalent of the complex emotional tension of a dramatic character. The deliberate wit of his early plays in the form of word-play is now knit into his imagery. To give a comparatively simple example, in *The Comedy of Errors* the word 'cheer' is repeatedly used by Antipholus of Ephesus to welcome Balthazar.

Ant E. You are sad, Signior Balthazar : pray God, our cheer
May answer my good will and your good welcome here.

Bal. I hold your dainties cheap, sir, and your welcome dear.

Ant E. O, Signior Balthazar, either at flesh or fish,
A table full of welcome makes scarce one dainty dish.

Bal. Good meat, sir, is common that every churl affords.

Ant E. And welcome more common ; for that's nothing but words.

Bal. Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.

Ant E. Ay, to a niggardly host and more sparing guest.
But though my cates be mean, take them in good part ;
Better cheer may you have, but not with better heart. (III ; i)

Apart from its obvious meaning 'food', the word 'cheer' by its very sound suggests 'chair'—a seat which seems in order when we notice that it is followed by 'welcome'. Besides, in the context of the refusal to admit them into Ant. E's own house, which they presently encounter, 'welcome' turns out to be a fine piece of comic irony ; and more, it comes up to Ant. E's belief "...welcome more common : for that's nothing but words." "Cheer" also indicates the speaker's joyous disposition. Now for an example in *Macbeth* :

... Seyton !—I am sick at heart ;

When I behold—Seyton, I say !—This push

Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now...(V, iii).

where the connexion between *cheer* and *dis-seat* is clear enough ; the similarity in pronunciation between the two words *cheer* and *chair* cannot be missed, and *dis-seat* naturally follows *chair*. But the initial *cheer* has a link with *sick at heart*. The pun here well expresses

Macbeth's desperate condition. The comic irony in the dialogue between Ant. E and Balthazar already quoted from the *Errors* shows up as grimly ironical in a different situation in *Macbeth* Act III, scene 4 where Lady Macbeth also seems to ascribe more value to 'welcome' than to the feast proper in entertaining the guests.

My royal Lord

'You do not give the cheer : the feast is sold,

That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,

'Tis given with welcome :

Here *cheer* meaning 'food' is followed by *feast* which in turn asks for *welcome* to the guests. 'Welcome' has an effective undertone of requesting the guests to take their seats, which presumably they are occupying. The suggestion of 'chair' in *cheer* has an ironical implication for Macbeth, for presently he discovers that in his banquet hall, where welcome should attend all, he himself has become an unwelcome stranger. The sight of Banquo's ghost occupying his chair unnerves him totally. This leads to disorder, the guests depart and the *welcome* of Lady Macbeth proves Ant. E's 'nothing but words'.

To take another example from *The Comedy of Errors*, in which the word 'nothing' is specially relevant to its comic situation :

Dro. S. ...Well, sir, I thank you.

Ant. S. Thank me, sir ! for what ?

Dro. S. Marry, sir, for this something that you gave me for nothing.

Ant. S. I'll make you amends next, to give you nothing for something. (II, ii.)

There is hardly any pun here, but the wit is in the chiasmic order of something and nothing, much in the fashion of Berowne's 'They have pitched a toil, I am toiling in a pitch'. Again, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* Launce is in a clownish manner witty with 'nothing'.

Pro. Who then ? his spirit ?

Val. Neither

Pro. What then ?

Val. Nothing

Launce. Can nothing speak ? Master, shall I strike ?

Pro. Who wouldst thou strike ?

Launce. Nothing

Pro. Villain, forbear.

Launce. Why, sir, I'll strike nothing : I-pray you. (III, i)

As against this, the remark of Lear's Fool about his master stands out significantly : ...'now art thou an O without a figure, I am better than

thou art now, I am a Fool, thou art nothing'. This describes the miserable state in which Lear finds himself for credulously accepting his two daughters' false protestations, compounded of mere words and nothing more. Viewed against the total meaning of King Lear, the word 'nothing' when played on takes on a new significance, as will be evident from the following exchange between Lear and Cordelia :

Lear. What can you say to draw

A third more opulent than your sisters ? Speak.

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing !

Cor. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing will come of nothing. Speak again. (I, i.)

It may be pointed out here that in Shakespeare if a certain word is frequently repeated with emphasis, one may well suspect that the repetition is purposeful. The meaning of the word most likely is part of the meaning of the play in which it occurs. One such word in *Lear*, of course, is 'nothing', echoing throughout the play, and much to blame for the tragic misunderstanding between the old king and Cordelia. Blinded by anger at her 'nothing', he does not see the word's true meaning, which in the situation is not really unflattering for Lear. She on her part may be impolitic, and is certainly niggardly of speech compared with her two sisters' loud protestations ; but her one word speaks volumes for her filial love and, at the same time, expresses her unhappiness. All she can say in reply to Lear's eager question is 'nothing', by which she means to emphasize at once that it is not a good or impressive word but only good actions that can gain 'results', that the asseverations of her sisters are absolutely hollow, that she is unwilling to compete with them in expressing filial love in words, since she knows that they are 'no things', and her love compared with theirs is 'More ponderous' than her 'tongue'. Judging Goneril and Regan from Cordelia's point of view, which seems acceptable, there is little inconsistency in their behaviours towards their father. Since they are not like good Cordelia, they think it useless to do homage to one who after abdication is no more than 'no nothing'. That Lear is still to complete his education, unfortunately, through tragic experience is betrayed by his simple confidence that he can remain a king even after depriving himself of his kingship. Even when he proposes to live with only 'The name and all th' addition to a king,' he sets him an ideal of renunciation that is marked with contradictions, though in reality he is turned into 'nothing' soon after. And shocked beyond measure, he begins fretting about the world. By contrast Richard II longs for a

complete renunciation. He must 'nothing be', and give up 'The pride of kingly sway' from out his heart, and forswear 'All pomp and majesty.' Whereas Richard's prayer is, "Make me, that nothing have, with nothing griev'd," Lear finds himself in conflict with Goneril and Regan because of his resolve not to part with his hundred knights, who are really his status symbol. Lear's experiment proves tragic; for it cannot be that one should give up one's power and authority and still hope to command usual regard in society. Lear perceives his folly when divesting himself of his kingship he finds that he is in a state of nonbeing or 'nothingness', so that the question he asks The Fool—'Who is it that can tell me who I am? — is simply rhetorical. He indeed knows what The Fool's unflattering reply should be, for that is his own answer too... 'an O without a figure thou art nothing.' He is now Lear's shadow, a mere cipher. We may recall here how T. S. Eliot echoes this 'nothing' of *King Lear* in *The Waste Land*, the following extract from which lends further support to my contention. This does not, however, mean overlooking possible echoes from other plays of Shakespeare.

'What is that noise?'

The wind under the door.

'What is that noise now? What is the wind doing?'

Nothing again nothing.

'Do

'You know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember

Nothing?

I remember

Those are pearls that were his eyes.

'Are you alive, or not? Is there nothing in your head?

But

O O O O that Shakespeherian Rag

Here also 'O' is emblematic of hollowness; and is associated with the previous 'nothing' which links up with 'Those are pearls that were his eyes' in a level of the unconscious, or in a state approaching it. The tagging of the 'Shakespeherian Rag' O O O O repeating Lear's helpless groans as a man reduced to 'nothing' is intended not only to intensify but also to dramatize the mood and the atmosphere in the lady's room.

In Shakespeare a visual experience often suggests the pun. One well appreciates Rosalind's 'Sir, you have wrestled well, and overthrown More than your enemies,' after the wrestling scene, or in *Richard III* the Duke of Gloucester's 'I'll make a corse of him that disobeys I,' a

threat to force the pall-bearers should they refuse to set down the corse, or Hamlet's, seeing his father's apparition 'I'll make a ghost of him that lets me.' Compared with these is highly interesting the punning link between the phrase 'breach in nature' with which Macbeth vivifies the mortal wounds in the person of Duncan and the phrase 'Unmannerly breach'd with gore,' used by him to describe the supposed murderers' daggers. There is little evidence to suggest that Shakespeare made here any conscious efforts to play upon the word 'breach.' In a situation such as this the pun that a character may use comes to him as a kind of automatic release of emotion, working as if it were a safety-valve. Lady Macbeth's pun in her resolve :

If he do bleed,

I'll gild the faces of the grooms withel,

For it must seem their guilt (II, ii.)

is somewhat different in the sense that it is a product of what she has already mentally visualized, preparing herself at the same time with great efforts to stand the bloody spectacle. The words 'gild' and 'guilt,' having similar sounds, are deeply expressive of the extremely nervous tension of Lady Macbeth. Also, they make her statement so impressive as to make it almost memorable. More than the taunt at her husband's 'manhood' which it indicates, implicit in it is her attitude to the crime. She cannot see much beyond the present, for to her 'guilt is something like gilt' easily removed or, if needed, painted on. In the end, of course, she discovers that after all her sin is too fast and indelible. Interestingly, as Kenneth Muir rightly points out,¹⁵ the image of gilding looks forward to Macbeth's description of Duncan's dead body—

His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood. (II, iii)

The instances of the puns cited till now are not intended to define some independent pattern of development in Shakespeare's use of this language device. For whatever pattern of this is discerned in the final analysis is knit into the thought-pattern which his work as a whole reveals. The two are dependent on each other, no matter if in variable keys, and not mutually exclusive. What potency a pun should hold is determined by the nature of a particular dramatic exigency, and the dramatist may know of it with no conscious efforts at all. If a certain pun is seen performing nearly identical functions in two or more plays, or, for, that matter, there are frequent similarities between Shakespeare's early and late style, we should have little cause for surprise. One instance would do to make the point. A common enough punning word is 'die' which figures so prominently in both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Antony and Cleopatra*—the two tragedies distanced from each other by twelve or

thirteen years. But in their death scenes the pun is successively used to heighten the dramatic effect. Its normal meaning apart, the verb 'to die' till the seventeenth century would mean "to experience the consummation of the sexual act" and also "to dye" in the modern sense. One would recall how Donne has used this pun so successfully in *The Good-Morrow* and *The Canonization*. Romeo's dying speech contains the pun on 'die': 'O true apothecary! Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.' (dies). Juliet too embraces death with the same pun in her lips:

Yea, noise?—then I'll be brief—O happy
dagger! (*Snatching Romeo's dagger.*)

This is thy sheath; (*Stabs herself.*) there rest

and let me die. (Falls on Romeo's body and dies.) (V, iii)

Once we perceive the secondary meaning of 'die' we can easily read the sexual undertones of the words 'dagger,' 'sheath,' and 'rest.' Desire frustrated in an unlovely situation can seek fulfilment only in figures such as these.

What Troilus declares in a different context may as well be applied to the lovers in both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

This is the

monstrosity in love Lady, that the will is infinite and
the execution confin'd; that the desire is boundless, and the
act a slave to limit. (Troilus III, ii),

Cleopatra's 'immortal longings' may be regarded as a belated but honest confession of her boundless desire, which, since Antony is dead, may reach satiety only through death. Her make-believe jealousy of Iras, dead a short while ago, serves to reflect the momentary glimpse of her life with Antony that is no more but which she would feign capture before Iras can reach Antony. This is not to suggest that Shakespeare was a Freudian before Freud, nor have we lost anything because Shakespeare had not heard of the Leibniz theme. What is very true about him is that his studies of human behaviour are more intense and varied than any school of psychologists is likely to explore. In *Antony and Cleopatra* death appears as a lover, a bridegroom, or a bride—but 'die' retains the same punning meaning. Part estimate of Cleopatra's character is given by Enobarbus through this pun.

Under a compelling occasion let women die: it were pity to cast them away for nothing, though between them and a great cause, they should be esteemed nothing. Cleopatra catching but the least noise of this dies instantly. I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer moment: I do think there is mettle in

death, which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such celerity in dying. (I, ii)

Death is pictured as a lover by Cleopatra when Iras falls and dies :

If thou and nature can so gently part,
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,
Which hurts, and is desir'd. (V, ii)

Antony's

... I will be

A bridegroom in my death, and run into 't
As to a lover's bed.

(IV, xii)

should appear near enough Cleopatra's wordplay on 'die' in the following lines expressing her grimly humorous desire which further deepens the tragic emotion inherent in the situation.

O I come, come, come ;

(*They heave Antony aloft to Cleopatra.*)

And welcome, welcome I Die when thou hast liv'd,
Quicken with kissing.

(IV, xlii)

She would wish Antony to play the lover's part quickly and *die* for the last time before he is dead. I suspect a pun in 'Quicken'—whose two meanings are 'gain life or vitality' and 'cause to bequicken,' both of which fit in with the sexual meaning of 'die' intended in the situation. Her 'Quicken' is not so unlike Romeo's 'quick' in 'thy drops are quick.' The characters stressing the secondary meanings in their speeches in a tense situation may appear frivolous at first sight, but a close look will show that the so-called frivolity is no more than part of the device to effect the intensity of the moment.

Now that I have illustrated a few of the peculiarities of Shakespeare's pun, I may as well enumerate its chief functions, specially in his tragedies. First, as in the case of a word or an image in poetry, a pun's role could not have been performed by anything else. Secondly, puns are a kind of illogical reinforcement of 'the logical sequence of thought' as in the lines of Lady Macbeth quoted a little while ago. Thirdly, puns effect some kind of mixed metaphors by linking together disparate images. Fourthly, a pun in Shakespeare presupposing multiple-mindedness leaves the audience or the reader with a complex of ideas, thus enhancing the total meaning of a play. Fifthly, and it follows from the first, as in all poetic plays, poetry explores the innermost reality of human experience, so do puns often, specially when they are unconscious ; reaching the distant deep of the human heart,

they bring to the surface even those emotions which are perceptible but inexpressible through ordinary language.

From the point of view of drama the functions of Shakespeare's conceits are nearly analogous to those of his puns. Speaking broadly, provided the images tend to be metaphorical, a conceit is based on comparison between two or more disparate images, each of which independently communicates an idea. A conceit seizes upon an idea for the purpose of comparison and then elaborates the same by playing upon it. Shakespeare's early works have in them various plays upon ideas suiting the occasions, many of which are prolonged in the way chevril gloves are stretched out, to argue, to persuade or for serving as decorative devices for their own sake. It is not until his later plays that the conceits become dramatically integral, that is to say, organic. Whereas the unconscious puns with multiple shades of meanings are a kind of co-product of the poetic process, conceits depending on comparison between two or more unlike things are almost invariably deliberate, the quality of wit they produce varying according to the degree of ingenuity with which they are formed. Under ingenuity I would also include the capacity to fashion a conceit in such a way as would suit the demands of a subject, and observe the necessary 'decorum.' As I have indicated, a conceit in Shakespeare's early plays is generally out of place, and used as a decorative convention. Let me take an example from *Love's Labour's Lost* which Professor Clemen has discussed so well¹⁶ by comparing it with another from *Twelfth Night*.

Boyet. Therefore change favours ; and, when they repair
Blow like sweet roses In the autumn air.

Princess. How blow ? how blow ? speak to be understood.

Boyet. Fair ladies mask'd are roses in their bud ;
Dismask'd, their damask sweet commixhere shown,
Are angels vailing clouds, or roses blown.

Princess. Avaunt, perplexity ! (L.L.L.V, ii)

Perplexity Indeed ! Boyet explains himself in so complicated a manner that rather than making himself clear to the Princess, he makes the confusion worse. This is due to his studied enthusiasm for elaborating the conceit 'Blow like sweet roses,' in which process there is the unnecessary digression 'are angels vailing clouds.' Placed by its side the two lines from the Duke's conversation with Viola in *Twelfth Night* reveal something different.

For women are roses, where fair flower
Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour. (II, iv)

Here the image of rose is functional, in that it adequately expresses the Duke's thought about women. To state it in abstract terms would mean taking away much of its emphasis. Besides, there is not anything in this comparison that is superfluous. I have said that in the early plays a conceit is generally a decorative device, and I stress the word 'generally' for it is not always so. At times it may be highly functional, perhaps expressing a thought or revealing the nature of a character employing the conceit. In *Love's Labour's Lost* Berowne's observation on feminine psychology, as quoted below, seems apposite.

What ! I love, I sue, I seek a wife—

A woman, that is like a German Clock,

Still a-repairing, ever out of frame,

And never going aright, being a watch,

But being watch'd that it may still go right ! (*L.L.L.* III, i)

Berowne has elaborately given his estimate of a woman's nature through comparing it with the behaviour of a German clock. But this conceit from his soliloquy, though elaborate, is irreducible and, of course, irreplaceable by simple abstract terms. Furthermore, it is a testimony to Berowne's observant nature revealed in course of his self-examination. The force of the pun on 'watch' is noteworthy. For a more elaborate conceit on the clock image, we may turn to *Richard II*, where the similarity between Richard and a clock has been defined point by point.

For now hath time made me his numb'ring clock ;

My thoughts are minutes ; and with sighs they jar

Their watches on unto my eyes, the outward watch,

Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,

Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears. (*Rich. II*, V, v)

The conceit here, an image of grief-stricken and self-pitying Richard, is in keeping with his love for dramatizing his reflective nature, its most remarkable ingenuity being the comparison of his finger busy wiping tears with a clock dial. It shows once more how Shakespeare's fancy combined with intellect plays many variations.

It is common knowledge by now that in Shakespeare's comedies the measure of aggressiveness displayed in the lovers' wit-combat is really their emotional barometer—a popular dramatic contrivance, psychologically tenable, to indicate passion in its true colours. But remarkably, without being aggressive wit can perfectly show the depth of love, as also make a tender romantic situation tenderer still. The following exchange between Juliet and Romeo is for illustration :

Jul. At what O'clock to-morrow

Shall I send to thee ?

Rom. At the hour of nine.

Jul. I will not fail ; 'tis twenty years till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Rom. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

Jul. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company. (R & J. II, ii)

The wit of it is in the hyperbole 'tis twenty years till then,' and in the putting of two ideas—forgetting and remembering—in reverse order to suit her clever, loving argument. To Juliet Romeo's absence, even for a brief while, is naturally unwelcome, a tediousness wittily expressed through the hyperbole we have just noted. A similar example is given below from the same play *Romeo and Juliet*.

Jul. I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days ;
O, by this count I shall be much in years
Ere I again behold my Romeo ! (III, v)

If to Juliet a minute seems many days, to Hamlet in a very different situation two months may not appear more than two hours, as will be evident from the bitter sarcastic wit with which he reviles Ophelia in Act III, scene ii.

Ham. What should a man do but be merry ? For look you how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within's two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long ? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sable. O heavens ! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet ? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year ; etc.

In it is seen Hamlet's agonizing thought, and no laughter is intended. As for Juliet, she has been consistent in the use of this figure for the purpose of stressing her feeling about Romeo's absence. In a later play, *Othello*, no less dramatic is the conceit of Cassio with which he indicates his joy at the news of Desdemona's safe arrival at Cyprus.

Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands,
Traitors ensteep'd to enclog the guiltless keel,
As having sense of beauty, do omit
Their mortal natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona. (Othello, II, i)

That the conceit here is organic in character is seen from the two distinct functions it performs. First, it reflects Cassio's sense of relief that no harm

from the storm has befallen Desdemona's beauty and, following this, his ecstatic joy. Secondly, there is more in it in praise of Desdemona's beauty, that could even tame Nature, and this is in consonance with Cassio's eulogy of hers moments ago as 'a maid that paragon's description and wild fame.' There is, however, little evidence to support Professor Clemen's contention that 'the rescue appeared to the hard-pressed seafarers in a miraculous light, and Cassio rivets this impression with an image.'¹⁷ In a 'similar vein Arviragus in one of Shakespeare's last plays *Cymbeline* uses a conceit which is both lyrical and witty, and which brings forward the reflective mind of the speaker and the impression he has already formed about Imogen in course of his previous meeting with her in disguise.

Nobly he yokes

A smiling with a sigh, as if the sigh
Was what it was, for not being such a smile ;
The smile mocking the sigh, that it would fly
From so divine a temple, to commix
With winds that sailors rail at.

(*Cymb.* IV, ii)

The force of wit in this conceit is in its proper dramatic employment, in the suggestion of a rare combination of 'A smiling' and 'a sigh' in her. Looking back, in *King Lear* we come across a conceit depending on images but formed in similar manner, which too expresses the rich combination, this time, of 'patience' and 'sigh'.

.....patience and sorrow strove

Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once : her smiles and tears
Were like a better way : those happy smilets
That play'd on her ripe lip seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes : which parted thence
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. In brief,
Sorrow would be a rarity most beloved,
If all could so become it.

(IV, iii)

And further back still, not in a play but in a poem, *Venus and Adonis*, we find a similar process employed, though in an embryonic form:

O, how her eyes and tears lend and borrow
Her eyes seen in her tears, tears in her eye ;
Both crystals, where they viewed each other's sorrow.....

These instances of conceits are a further evidence of how in Shakespeare poetry combines with wit. At times Shakespeare's wit may be highly effective through an economy of words. Hamlet's bitterness

at his mother's marriage so soon after his father's death is tellingly expressed in a way characterized by brevity.

Tl rift, thrift, Horatio

The Funeral baked meat did coldly furnish forth the marriage table.

(I, ii)

The quick fusion of the two ideas by Hamlet is indicative of his sharp intellect, as also of his deeply wounded feelings now mixed with extreme disgust. The linguistic process forming this searing, sarcastic piece of witticism resembles that forming the two witty lines of Richard II. Coveting John of Gaunt's property he wishes him dead, so that

"The lining of his coffers shall make coats

To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars."

Indeed Hamlet as wit is unrivalled among Shakespeare's heroes. Sharp, even devastatingly frank at times, his utterances may at unexpected moments turn out to be witty but not perhaps amusing just at once. Often with remarkable facility and nimbleness he splits a line or a word even, and uses a part of it to some purpose. Let me quote by way of illustration two lines of Hamlet. Their significance is better appreciated when they are associated with some previous lines, particularly with the one expressing his resolve before approaching his mother's chamber, that he will 'speak daggers to her, but use none.' He acts up to his thought, as indeed his words do pierce Gertrude. She implores her son :

O, speak to me no more I

These words like daggers enter in my ears. (III, iv)

And then, when much of his anger is emptied on her, she says to him 'O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain,' and Hamlet's immediate counsel to her is that she lead a cleaner life :

O, throw away the worse part of it,

And live the purer wrth the other half,.....as if, speaking

literally, a heart can be 'cleft' with words, and a part of it 'cast away at will.

I have made a brief mention of ambiguity present in unequal degrees in all forms of wit, which, however, is not the same thing as poetic ambiguity, although the processes in which the two are formed and their ends are not essentially at variance, since both aim at precision, that is to say, as Polonius might wish,

With assays of bias

By indirections find directions out.

In Shakespeare ambiguity may be profound as also emotional and not simply intellectual. Such dramatic ambiguities seem easier to understand than the ambiguities in poetry, specially studied by Empson

and Cleanth Brooks. In the Elizabethan comedy ambiguity is the language of disguise, though it is by no means unusual in tragedy ; the comedies of Shakespeare we immediately remember in this connexion are *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. Ambiguity also plays the pivotal role in *The Merchant of Venice*, where the simple language of the bond is rendered ambiguous by Portia, and successfully applied to bring about Shylock's discomfiture and thus prevent Antonio's doom.

It is also seen in *Macbeth*, where equivocation is a very potent cause of the hero's undoing. In each of these plays it is integral to the plot. Hamlet's madness is a disguise he 'craftily' wears in which the language he speaks—enigmatic to those for whom it is intended—is a natural way of speaking. It is dramatically relevant, though the wisdom of his pretended madness may or may not be doubted. His riddling speeches in that state serve to let off much of his pent up emotion. Cressida's conceit on the 'divided self' in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III, scene ii, is perfectly in character, later proving an effective irony for Troilus. Viewed against the subsequent gay abandonment of hers in Diomedes's company, it leaves us with little doubt about the deliberateness of her ambiguity. The link is easily detected between what she says in the following lines :

I have a kind of self resides with you ;
But an unkind self, that itself will leave,
To be another's fool. I would be gone :
Where is my wit ? I speak I know not what...(III, ii)

and her self-pity later :

Troilus, farewell I one eye yet looks on thee,
But with my heart the other eye doth see.
Ah I poor our sex ; this fault in us I find,
The error of our eye directs our mind. (V, ii)

The four lines quoted from Cressida's speech in III, ii mean, according to some, that half of herself resides with Troilus even though she leaves him, and this half is unkind to her since it leaves her at all to be somebody else's fool. I would, however, give a different interpretation which is as follows : 'I have a kind of self which resides with you, Troilus, though I leave you. But I carry with me a self that will prove unkind to me since, having no control of mine over it, it will leave me to be another's fool.' She, it seems, is thinking ahead and the word 'itself' is just an emphatic pronoun of 'an unkind self.' I suspect there is a pun on 'fool.' Where indeed is her wit gone when she only too readily descends to be the 'fool' of Diomedes completely ? Mind is guided by the 'error of our eye.' On his part Troilus also soon realises that

between Cressida's protestation of love through words and her actual actions there is the lack of congruence. Once again words are 'nothing', as Troilus painfully discovers :

Words, words, mere words, no matter for the heart ;
 The effect doth operate another way. (Tearing the letter)
 Go, wind to wind, there turn and change to-gether.
 My love with words and errors still she feeds,
 But edifies another with her deeds. (V, iv)

A study of Shakespeare's wit yields interesting results when it is made specially in relation to *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry IV*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Hamlet* and *Measure for Measure*. Wit in *Love's Labour's Lost* is used a good deal as an entertainment in itself, and the play's action, however thinly spread, is dependent on the series of wit-combats. In *Romeo and Juliet* wit seems to me sometimes out of place and sometimes very much the reverse: Romeo's wit is Hamlet's in embryo. Mercutio, though not Romeo's equal in this respect, must get killed, lest by his very exuberant nature amply revealed in his wit, he should move parallel with Romeo, if not outshine him, and pose a dramatic problem. Wit in *Henry IV* is mixed with Falstaff's humour, receiving its sustenance from the frequent comic situations, each of which affords him an opportunity for displaying his inventive genius. The peculiar reputation the two parts of *Henry IV* enjoy among Shakespeare's history plays is greatly owing to this. In *Much Ado*, it is used for its own sake, and also as an expression of character and an instrument for shaping the plot. In *Troilus and Cressida*, generally regarded as his most intellectual play, Cressida's flippancy in the Greek camp lights up the depth of Troilus's despair in an absolutely devastating way. In *Hamlet* it is used in almost every conceivable way. In point of wit, *Hamlet* is among Shakespeare's tragedies what *Much Ado About Nothing* is among his comedies. In *Measure for Measure*, it has a sardonic, cynical effect against the background of the emotion inherent in the plot.

Wit, however, is sparse in the Romances. The few puns and conceits that are there are, except in *The Winter's Tale* perhaps, unconscious and finely blent with poetry, which these plays seek to vindicate. Whether or not Shakespeare was trying to shape his final plays in accordance with the new found Jacobean style, we shall probably never know. But there is little doubt that he began an experiment of this kind in *Cymbeline* only to end it up with *The Tempest*, where it seems he reached perfection in this direction. However, the very nature of the subject matter of his final plays, exploring at once

the supernatural and the realistic planes and having to study the multifarious moods of apparently inexplicable nature posed for him a challenge that could be met with poetry only in which wit is likely to appear harsh. That seems to explain why there is in them no more the profusion of the early types of wit—sometimes decorative, artificial and sometimes of real service dramatically. So, where wit now occurs, it fits in with the situation—poetic or otherwise—extremely well. In this, of course, lies the distinctiveness of the wit in his last plays, though there is little essential difference between its composition here and that in the early comedies. Sebastian's joke with Gonzalo in *The Tempest*, comparing his intellect with his watch, and the other forms of witticisms he shoots are not without their precedents. His witty exuberance in the scene further indicates their tremendous, almost overflowing sense of relief at their miraculous escape. Miranda's unconscious pun on 'gentle' and 'fearful' noted by Mahood¹ and Perdita's witty encounter recalling Juliet's would confirm the suggestion that Shakespeare's romantic heroines are naturally witty. I would like to conclude this essay with the observation that Shakespeare was a dramatist who seldom cast away anything; by exploring nearly instinctively the same puns and conceits and other types of wit he to a great extent transformed them in his maturer and final plays.

If in this study Shakespeare's various clowns have been virtually overlooked, that is because they have already received considerable critical notice and their wit as such presents no baffling ambiguity. I have left out those common Elizabethan witticisms like Leonato's 'Her mother hath many times told me so' in reply to Don Pedro's question whether Hero is his daughter, though it at once sets the witty tone of the play in the very first scene. Also, one of the types of wit not considered here is that used by Mercutio to describe his mortal wound. The reason for these omissions is that their significance is not so profound as to merit a close examination in this brief essay, although here and there a witticism such as Mercutio's is not only indicative of one's character, and attitude to life and death, but also capable of filling us with a complex of emotions at the same time.

Certainly nobody will ever say that Shakespeare's greatness as a dramatist is because of his wit, but we shall do him injustice if in a critical assessment of his total genius we disregard its importance utterly. In respect of wit's dramatic use, as in many other respects, Shakespeare is a unique figure among his contemporaries.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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An interesting article on Whiter is the recent one by Mary Bell entitled "Walter Whiter's Notes on Shakespeare," in *Shakespeare Survey*, XX.
2. This, however, in no way suggests that Dr. Johnson had not a good ear for puns. In fact he could recognize even the subtlest of Shakespearean puns; only he would deny them their dramatic validity.
3. *The Well Wrought Urn*, London, 1949.
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THE FIGURES OF LONELINESS IN WORDSWORTH *

NIRMALA SINHA

Lonely figures crowd all the different types of Wordsworth's poetry—narrative, descriptive and lyrical. No doubt, the theme of solitude is hardly surprising in the context of pre-Romantic and Romantic poetry. What is important, however, is that Wordsworth sings of solitude not merely in an abstract fashion; he crystallizes his concern into "created characters" which, both quantitatively and qualitatively, form an obsessive pattern much more than Shelleyan idealists and Byronic heroes. Although Wordsworth frequently praises loneliness, he often strikes a different note too; it can be for him something stark and stern, or neutral. It is significant that, idealized or not, solitude in his poetry stands as a necessary phase in the development of the human (or rather his own) soul towards the communion with Infinity; this is borne out by his figures of loneliness. To establish my point, I shall make a selective survey of poems containing such figures. While these can be classified into a number of groups, they interlock among themselves. For my purpose, I shall divide these lonely figures into three broad groups: (a) non-human beings, (b) objectively created human characters who form the bulk of the figures, and (c) the Poet himself.

The non-human creatures are idealisations of a rather simple sort. As instances of them, I shall select, from among a host, a section of one poem and four other small poems, of which three are about solitary birds and two about solitary flowers. The first is taken from the second part of the comparatively less known poem "Contrast" (Part II, Stanzas I and 2, p. 165), in which the Poet compares and contrasts two kinds of solitary birds—one, a caged parrot in a Lady's bower, and the other, a wren living alone in full freedom, but "not shunning man's abode, though shy/Almost as though itself of human ken" (61.31-2.) Wordsworth finds the first bird fretting in its "gilded cage" but the wren is "self-contented", and like Hardy's Thrush, "sometimes gives/A slender unexpected strain" "To the bleak winds" of winter, though

* Page-references are to the Oxford Edition of *The Poetical Works of Wordsworth*, ed. Thomas Hutchinson: O.U.P., 1913.

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herself a "child of Spring". Unlike Hardy's Thrush, she does not "appear" and "is sought in vain". In the concluding line Wordsworth calls her "Nature's Darkling"—which is proof enough of the latter bird to be far happier, living in a more envied condition, than that of the caged bird "tended with nice care by lady fingers," "trilling her song with tutored powers." Standing as a kind of allegory of the opposition between eighteenth and nineteenth century attitudes to nature, this indeed makes a simple Wordsworthian affirmation of the true type of solitude which is inspired by communion with nature.

The other bird-figure is in the well-known 'the Cuckoo' (p. 183), whose "wandering voice", babbling "to the vale of sunshine and of flowers" (Stanzas I and 3) brings to the Poet fond memories of his childhood days, when he had sought to trace the "voice" a thousand times, but had failed. Wordsworth calls him "blessed", "blithe"—the alliteration of the adjectives links up the notions of joy and piety in solitude and also suggests the musicality of the bird, whose mysterious notes can turn the very much earthy earth to be "an unsubstantial faery place". The idea of a single solitary bird communicating joy around thus powerfully brings out Wordsworth's naturalistic idealism.

The same idea of solitude generating joy and bliss from the source of Nature is found in the figure of the Green Linnet in the poem of that name (p. 159), also well-known to all students of Wordsworth. But here a human note creeps in : the Cuckoo is invisible, so is the Wren, but the Green Linnet is visible, though often deceiving the Poet's "dazzled sight", when he could not distinguish it from the "dancing leaves" (ll.33-4), as it ranged "up and down the bowers" (l.19). Wordsworth repeatedly emphasizes its joyous loneliness. It is all alone ("thyself thy own enjoyment" (l.24)—and scatters "gladness without care" (l.22). He, the presiding spirit of the lovely unclouded spring day is 'sole' in his "employment" (l.20) of flitting gaily from bough to bough. He is an example of sublimated joy, "too blest with anyone to pair" (l.23). The poet is alone there, and so is the bird, but there is a mysterious communion between the nonhuman and the human : one imparting natural bliss and the other receiving grace abounding.

Of the two flower-poems, one is the second Daisy Poem ('To The Same Flower', p. 158). Here is a commonplace homeliness associated with Solitude and gladness contrasted with the faraway idealism of the birds. The poet sings of a single flower, an "unassuming common-place of Nature" with "a homely face", which is lovely with "a grace" which "love endows". In his fancy he gives her "many a fond and idle name", each of which suits the flower "best". "Starlike", the flower communes

with a sweet silence, "breathes with him the sun and air" and imparts to him a "share" of its "meek nature". The idea of homeliness and love, along with the communion between the object and the poet as in the case of the Green Linnet, brings the solitary symbol nearer humanity as well as indicative of a Christian attitude.

In "The Small Celandine" (p. 571) the poet strikes a different note. Normally, the flower (plant) like the Daisy, loves the sun and shrinks from cold and rain. But Wordsworth one day sees one "Standing forth an offering to the blast/And buffeted at will by rain and storm" (ll. 11-12). The poet stops and muses that "it is neither courage nor choice that has made the poor lonely flower not to seek its usual security of "close self-shelter", but old age, which has stiffened its tender limbs, and it cannot stop decay. The poem sounds a bleak note, as the aspect of solitude here is associated with the idea of the decay and inevitability of old age. It is no happy sight that meets Wordsworth's eyes: rather it brings to him a bitter awakening to the truth that nothing can stand against the evolutionary Laws of Nature.

No doubt, the solitary bird and flower-figures are conventional themes, but the Wordsworthian conceit re-vitalises the very conventionality into something rich and interesting. As we have seen, in general they are associated with feelings of joy, bliss, sweetness and light: judging by its past, even the Celandine comes of this tribe. What is the source of happiness of these lonely figures? We may ask, as did Wordsworth in a later context: "How shall I seek the origin?" (*Prelude*, II, 1.346). It seems that the question itself suggests the answer, namely, these figures have found a mysterious fountain of joy in the very solitary state itself in which they live and play and sing; for, axiomatically, they are "Nature's own", free as Nature is free.

Next, the lonely human figures which are strewn in abundance in Wordsworth's Works. These are an advance upon the non-human figures. While the non-human figures are rather allegorical abstractions, these, being character portrayals, take adequate stock of the variety and the complexity of the *concrete* human situation. Finally, as we shall see, they stand as objective projections—not direct idealizations—of the Poet's attitude to life—of his ability to feel "for passions that were not my own" ("Michael", p. 31).

The first poem to be considered is "Resolution and Independence" ("The Leech-gatherer", p. 195). Here is a picture of something stark and dark and mysterious—enveloped with a strange nameless terror (from which an ordinary mind might recoil), embedded as it were in a bright sunny setting. The skylark warbling in the sky or the playful hare

acing on the moor, though bringing to him childhood memories, fails to chase away the melancholy that oppresses the poet's heart brooding on his uncertain future prospects. The happiness that lights up the face of Nature all around, rather intensifies, by way of contrast, the unhappy "lot" of Man awaiting the inevitability of Doom : of frustration, decay and death. He has been longing to be free from the "fear that kills" (provoked by his broodings on Coleridge, Chatterton, Burns as well as on his own fate). It was then that he sees a Man—the "oldest Man that ever wore grey hairs", "not all alive nor dead", who seems to be less a human being and more a Natural object—"a huge stone", "a sea-beast/crawled forth on a shelf of rock". "He is bent double by age" and is "motionless as a cloud ;/That heareth not the loud winds,"/"upon the margin of that moorish flood" (stanzas VIII-XI).

The uncanny apparition must have struck the Poet with awe and terror, and it is only when the Man seems to uncoil himself and stirs a pool with a stick, that Wordsworth takes up the courage to address him. The Leech-gatherer looks up at him kindly with "Still vivid eyes", and when he answers to the Poet's queries, his "feeble words" comes in "Solemn order", with "a lofty utterance." His "stately speech" is "above the reach of ordinary men." He seems to be vested with a gentle dignity inspite of his solitary decrepitude, having heroically endured life's vicissitudes. The Man's words seem like the flow of a smooth-running stream which, for a time, lulls the Poet into inattentiveness—a fading in his awareness of physical existence (cf : "When the fleshly ear forgot her functioning" (*Prelude II*, ll. 415-416). Noticing this, the Man, a bit surprised, repeated his words, and in a flash the Poet's imagination finds full freedom, and he seems to be touched by a divine grace, and is lifted up from the abyss to which he had been sunk.

In this poem, the words 'loneliness' or 'lonely', emphasised by reiteration, bring out the theme with great poignancy. Here, It is associated with fortitude, stoic resignation breathing through the bedrock of reality, —suffering and old age—and thus reaching hope and faith in God.

The central figure of "The Cumberland Beggar" (pp. 566-69)—also a very old man—is so old that he is past aging anymore. It is literally his second childhood. He is as innocent and devoid of sentiment as an infant. He is almost one with the "wild unpeopled hills" where he takes temporary rest to take his meagre humble food, which falls on the ground from "his palsied hand" and is shared greedily by "small mountain birds". He moves on, hat in hand, his almost sightless eyes bent on "one little span of earth", and that motion is the only indication

that he still lives. Yet, this derelict, far from being "useless", is an important functionary. His very loneliness, coupled with his helplessness, inspires humane considerations in all whom he passes by. All unconsciously, he rouses good impulses in them, long practice of which turns these impulses into habit, which

".....does the work
Of reason, yet prepares that after-joy
Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,
By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
Doth find herself insensibly disposed
To virtue and true goodness." (ll.100-105).

One important aspect of this figure is the association of human solitude with the solitude of Nature. As the inspirer of human sympathy, it adds yet a new note. What is more important, unlike the Leech-gatherer, the Beggar's solitude does not suggest fortitude; but it is past fortitude or heroism, and is associated with a kind of *Nirvana*, a super-abnegation of the physical as well as spiritual self. The Beggar is free, even as Nature is free. The best setting for him is the solitude of the mountains, where wild birds sail on wilder winds in full freedom, though the old man in his decrepitude does not, in the least, react to his surroundings. He has ceased to suffer or feel, with all sensibilities lost. Perhaps Wordsworth has here created this figure as the embodiment of the impalpably sheer aspect of Solitude.

The story of Michael (in "Michael", p. 131) is the tragedy of a broken-hearted father suffering intolerable ignominy and shame because of his only son. Like the Cumberland Beggar, but in a different and more intense way, he shows a kinship between human and "natural" loneliness. His is a sublime personality reminding of the simple Biblical heroes. His home, The Evening Star, hangs on a mountain, which is "in truth an utter solitude". (l.13.) Once more, we find the stark, naked, barren aspect of Solitary Nature, not exactly terrifying, but which brings in its train a sense of awe, silencing trivial cries of woe and lamentations, and we seem to see the man's stature gathering an intensity of height from the mountain where he lived. He seems to be an integral part of the solitude. The end of Michael's career, after his estrangement with his son, consummates his loneliness, which is charged with fortitude, pathos and a heroic despair. What is also interesting is the pious note accompanying this solitude. He breathes religion as "natively" as the pure mountain air, and his solitary figure in the background of the unfinished "*Sheep-fold*" stands as enduring as the eternal hills.

The three human figures I have covered so far, no doubt reminds one of the Small Celandine. But while in the Small Celandine loneliness is only emblematic of old age, decay and death (mutability), the other three lonely figures, each in its own way develop the theme in a different and mature manner. All the three men are old : extreme old age has enveloped all three as with a vesture. To the Leech-gatherer, solitude coupled with old age imparts the remarkable dignity born of Resolution and Independence, and that in the most unassuming natural process. By the very fact that he exists, the Cumberland Beggar infuses the milk of human kindness in all he comes across and that too in the most unobtrusive natural way ; and to Michael it brings heroic fortitude, the eternal silence of the mountains investing him with a dignity all its own. These figures thus convey the rich complexity of human existence, which is not found in the flower-figure.

The Lucy Poems (pp. 109 and 187) are places where Wordsworth spiritualizes the solitary figure. She is "a mystic presence in the lonesome wild"—a presence diffused through both space and time. All her virtues are gifts of Nature herself who declared, so the poet says, "She shall be mine, and I will make/A lady of my own." Dwelling "among untrodden ways", like a "violet half-hidden from the eye", she "lived and died in the eye of Nature". She is endowed by Wordsworth with a super-sensuous personality. As a solitary she stands a perfect representative of that important part of Wordsworth's poetic attitude to life : his sympathy for the unfamiliar, humble aspects of life : neglected, yet in that very neglect the epitome of humanity ("fair as a star when only one" etc.) Lucy seems to stand as the ideal of Wordsworth's view of solitude in relation to Nature : as if, all that is best in Nature blooms best in loneliness. What is rather interesting is the elegiac note, the regret that breathes through Wordsworth's presentation of this solitary figure—as, if such figures are worth pursuing as ideals, but are always fugitive, impalpable, evanescent.

"The Solitary Reaper" strikes a kindred note. The strange song—theme, and the strange girl "reaping and singing by herself" in the field would always remain a mystery to the poet as well as to the readers. Her solitariness envelops her with a diaphanous elusive veil of music which is at once strange and remote, albeit so deeply touching in the pathos and melancholy which is associated with her loneliness.

With the same strangeness is vested the unknown Solitary girl by the beacon on the summit of a hill in *The Prelude* (XII, ll. 245-59, p. 738), who bore a piltcher on her head, and walked against the wind, her dress buffeted, but pulse maintained. It was a common, "an ordinary sight";

but by some strange mysterious power, the frightened child that the poet was then, was comforted and soothed. Wordsworth names such moments "Spots of Time" which "retain a renovating virtue when depressed." These spots of time, often found in connexion with the girl-figures (but elsewhere, too) are also related to solitude, which to Wordsworth seem to be worth pursuing, because of the mighty potencies these exercise on the human soul.²

The solitary human figures created by Wordsworth are of varied types, having varied qualities. Out of the mass of human kind, he evokes a few individual characters to illustrate his favourite doctrine that there exists a reciprocity between Man and Nature. It is necessary for his purpose to place the characters in utter solitude, for it is there that Nature is best revealed. (Sometimes he adds suffering as a condition to enhance his point further.)

While this is partially brought out in some of the human figures already looked at, this reciprocal association between Nature and Solitude is perhaps best seen in *The Excursion*. Let us take some instances from its two major characters especially from the first two books: "The Wanderer" (Bk. I), and "The Solitary" (Bk. II).

The Wanderer (Bk. I), though living with quite a number of brothers and sisters, had early learnt to withdraw within himself. He went "to a school that stood *sole* building/High up on a mountain's *dreary* edge/*Remote* from view of city spire", returned home "*all alone*", "through the wood *with no one near*." On his way home, the lonely child "Saw the evening stars come one by one", frightened at darkness deepening, and magnifying the proportions of the objects around. The sights created indelible impressions on the child-mind, though he could not understand then the depth of the feelings aroused "at the sights he saw. He eagerly drank into every sight and sound of Nature, and when he grew up a boy, he would often retire to "*Caves forlorn*. And mid the hollow depths of *naked* crags" to brood upon the sights and upon the feelings roused in him—trying to unravel the mysteries which seemed at once oppressive and fascinating. As a young man, the Wanderer "beheld from the *naked* top of some bold head-land" the sun rise up and bathe the earth and ocean with the glory of light, the sight of which "melted into him", and he thanked God fervently for creating him and receive all these gifts of blessedness. He seemed to have been "possessed" by this state of beatitude (ll. 122-76, 197-218; all the italics mine.)

This holy Communion with Nature in stark solitude had endowed him with a "Wisdom" which no book could supply, though he read

many. This filled him with a Wander-lust, and he was always on the move, learning great truths of life in his solitary trappings. For instance, that was how the Wanderer learned from the pitiful life-story of Margaret that even the Mother of Christ ("One...") "... in her worst distress/Had often times felt...../ The unbounded might of prayer and learned... / that consolation springs/From the meek Sufferer/". (*Excursion*, I, ll. 936-939).

The Wanderer is infused with "natural piety" from lessons of adversity, studying the lives of others. Incidentally, an interesting contrast is offered in "The Fountain" (p. 487) where the old Matthew learns to keep up a smiling appearance, often with a merry song on his lips—a solitary Joker in life's Circus, so to say, in the midst of sufferings of his own life : (cf. "By none/Am I enough beloved") for he had lost all his near and dear ones. He wore a face of joy because he had "been glad of Yore".

With the Wanderer—solitary as he is—is juxtaposed the Solitary (Bk. II) who may be said to be the arch-solitary among all the lonely human figures of Wordsworth : somewhat as Lucy stands in the centre of the girl-figures representing the mystic aspect of solitude.

The loneliness of the Solitary might be called somewhat negative : after sowing wild oats in many a crowded place and situation, he "Wastes the sad remainder of his hours/steeped in self-indulging spleen/" (ll. 309-310) "at safe distance from a world/not moving to his mind,"—as the Wanderer tells the Poet before the Solitary's appearance (ll.314-15.) The despondent or fatalistic attitude he himself derives from solitude further bears this out in some of the later books (e.g. Bk. III, ll. 984-91.) Yet, his self-imposed loneliness in the midst of Nature automatically assumes a cathartic function, so that even the Solitary has his moments of illumination.

The Solitary lives in a cottage which "had almost a *forbidding nakedness*", "dark and low". (which he calls his "domain, "cell", hermitage") ; strewn with a motley crowd of ("books, maps fossils, moss" to "instruments of music" and includes even "a shattered telescope") a lonely man's variegated interests. From the window can be viewed "two huge peaks," "lusty twins," who, and no human beings are his "prized companions". The Solitary explains how these "lofty brethren" "bear their part well in the wild concert" of the wind, chiefly when "the storm rides high", and "then they fill the upper air with roaring sound in an unceasing flow." But theirs also is the 'Song of stream and headlong flood', and they also echo back (so the Solitary imagines) the rumbling of thunder-blast in "breath-

less hour of noon". It is there that the sun seems to take rest awhile, before taking the final dip in the western seas; there the stars "peep and sparkle," and he listens to the "music of a finer tone," a silent harmony, a composition of clouds and mists and shadows, of sunlight, moonlight and star-light. With such a natural orchestra everpresent by his side to beguile his lonely existence, no wonder he loves his "cell" "better than a snail his house." (ll.640ff).

He tells his guests, how once in his quest for a man lost in a stormy night, he had a splendid vision. The search-party was lost in blinding mists, but towards the break of dawn. Suddenly, "a single step" "freed" him, and the vision that greeted his sight—of sky and clouds and shadows and early morning light was nothing short of the glorious Revelations "such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld/In vision" (ll.830-68.) The passage is too long to be quoted here, and it is to be read to appreciate its noble beauty. The Solitary is a natural poet, who has clear unclouded visions denied to common men, and this poetic spirit sustains him in his loneliness, as prayer and faith in God sustained the lonely Wanderer and kept up the buoyancy of his spirits. Notwithstanding his errors, the loneliness of the Solitary thus appears as the last phase in self-development⁸.

The foregoing illustrations show how different types of human solitaires crowd the pages of Wordsworth and how each in his own way illustrates the Poet's conception of loneliness. There is the group of old men, whose spirits "age cannot wither nor time decay". There is the group of young girls who emanate a sense of other-worldliness. There is the group of self-imposed recluses communing with the spirit of Nature. Revealing the mysteries of "Man, the heart of Man and human life" ("Michael," l. 33) they are all manifestations of human nature in the grand setting of Nature.

Finally, we come down to the poet as a lonely figure: the poet in his works, who, wandering "lonely as a cloud", is the companion of the Wanderer, looks at Cuckoos and daisies, reflects on Michael and the Leech-gatherer and so forth. As this "poet" reveals himself best in *The Prelude*, I shall take my instances from some portions of that poem (1850 edn.) As a child of fire he "made one long bathing of a summer's day/Basked in the sun and plunged and plunged again" and "stood all alone/Beneath the sky..... a naked savage" (l, ll.288-300.) Then again, a boy barely ten years old, he would "range the open heights", "through half the frosty night, to steal snared wood-cocks belonging to other people. A strong feeling would well up within him that he had been an intruder there, disturbing the peace of that place; and we

all know, how he heard among the solitary hills, low breathings seeming to dog his steps. He had like sensations time and again, as he hung on dangerous precipices bird-nesting, and the mountain-top seemed to raise its head higher and higher, and chase him in black admonition, as he "with trembling oar" turned back in his stolen boat. Like the Wanderer, he, too, in his childhood and boyhood felt the solitude peopled with "presences" that dazed his mind—"mysterious presences" (created by "higher minds") emanating from Nature, sometimes benignant (as in the bathing and skating scenes), sometimes malignant (as in the bird-nesting and boat-stealing episodes).

There are many characteristic incidents recorded in the first two Books of "The Prelude" which tell us of the growth of the sensibilities of the Boy, when from sheer fascination for rural objects, he began to seek Nature "for her own sake" (cf : "The Simplon Pass," "The Tintern Abbey" etc.) In all such cases, solitude becomes intimately associated with mystic revelations. He seemed to withdraw more and more within himself as a boy, a youth, also as a grown-up man (like the Wanderer) and mused upon the strange sensations he had felt : e.g.

"..... when the vale
Yet slumbering, lay in an utter solitude,
How shall I seek the origin ? Where find
Faith in the marvellous things which then I felt ?"
(*Prelude*, II, ll. 344-347. P. 647)

Often a "holy calm" overspread his soul, so much so

".....that bodily eyes
were utterly forgotten, and what I saw,
Appeared like something in myself, a dream
A prospect in mind". (*Prelude*, II, ll. 349-352.)

He realised in that dream-state of solitude, that "A plastic power abode with" him; that "An auxlliar light" came from his mind, "Which on the setting Sun/Bestowed new splendour" and "the midnight storm/ Grew darker in the presence of my eye" (*Prelude*, II, ll. 362 ff.)

In moments like these he was overwhelmed with bliss "ineffable" and he
"... felt the sentiment of Being spread

O'er all that moves and all that Seemeth still" (*Prelude*, II, 400-401)
He is convinced that thus does Revelation come in solitude and he communes "with every form of creature" through earth and heaven, who sang

"One song.....and It was audible
Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear
.....forget her functions" (*Prelude*, II, ll. 415-16, P. 648)

Just as the Solitary had his ears attuned to the orchestral music of his "Prized companions", Wordsworth also could listen to the "still sad music of humanity". He felt raptures similar to what the Solitary had felt, when in Summer vacation, returning alone after a night's revelry, he had a realization that "he made no vows, but vows were made for him", that he "should be a dedicated spirit" (*Prelude*, IV, ll. 308-338, P. 663) Later, when climbing the Snowdon, just one step taken by him brought him out of the mists (cf: the experience of the Solitary) and the splendid moonlit vista spread before his sight, brought the Infinite close to him (*Prelude*, XIV, ll. 38-68.) He was alone then ("And I..... as chanced, the foremost of the band", etc.) and in that sublime solitude was convinced that "both the enduring and the transient... build up greatest things/From least suggestions" (*Prelude*, XIV, ll.99-101 ; P, 747).

We are already acquainted with the incident, when the sight of the unknown woman on the lonely "wide moor" served as the touch of a healing presence, which dispelled all his childish fears of being lost in an alien place (*Prelude*, XII.) Further towards the end of the same book, Wordsworth recounts another incident, when he waited impatiently and peevishly for the "led palfreys" that should bear himself and his brother home. He took a shortcut path to a crag, which commanded a better view of the road through which the attendants would come. It was a tempestuous day and he sat alone fuming and fretting, with "a single sheep" on his right and "a blasted hawthorn" on his left. It was another "Spot of Time" which brought a bitter lesson to him (*Prelude* XII, ll. 286-316, pp. 738-739).

This it seems that Wordsworth wishes to convey through all these records is, that all that is obscure, impalpable, mysterious, inexplicable ; all that is Nameless, yet "felt within the blood and along the heart" find full realisation only in solitude, for loneliness sharpens the sensibilities otherwise deadened in sophistication.

But does Solitude mean merely an absence or escape from company? Surely not, at least for Wordsworth. Once more, like the Wanderer, he felt in his maturer years that, to him, Solitude being associated with mystic 'presences', is psychic rather than external. For instance, when he muses upon his boyhood pleasures and pranks, he seems to have "Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself/And of some other Being" (II, ll. 32-33) Even in the company of other boys running "a boisterous course on the Windermere/with rival course", he says at the end of the sport, "I was taught to feel perhaps too much/The *self-sufficing* power of solitude" (italic mine.) In company with other boys of his age-

groups, he rode on horses, galloped "in uncouth race" through the "temple where the Druids worshipped" or through the ruins of St. Mary's Abbey or "beat with thundering hoofs the level sand", he felt the "presence" of the spirit of rocks and streams.

Even when he grew older and took up his residence in London, he felt the same Presence that comes to the loneliness of the soul. In London also, where "thousands and thousands of her sons", live "amid the same perpetual whirl of trivial objects", and "though the picture weary out the eye" he felt "the spirit of Nature" revealed to him as "The Soul of Beauty and enduing life/Diffusing Composure, and ennobling Harmony", "through the press of self-destroying things" (VII, ll. 722-71.)

Wordsworth had sung of solitary spots of time, of Solitary places, of Solitary birds and plants, of Solitary human beings. As we have seen, he himself stands distinguished from most of the Solitary figures. While the other figures communicate something, good or otherwise, to the poet, he himself communes with the Infinite, the communion inspired by his solitude (somewhat like the Wanderer, but more so.)

* * *

I hope, I have shown that no total picture of Wordsworth is possible without taking into account the theme of loneliness as suggested by his Solitaries. As we have seen above, Solitude forms a nexus between Nature, life, and man in his study of them. This indeed confirms what Wordsworth himself said of his poetic purpose: "On Man, on Nature and on Human Life, / musing in Solitude....." (*The Recluse*, ll. 1-2). It is interesting to notice that, as visualised by Wordsworth, several types of loneliness cut across the various figures: highsoaring, thrilling, glad (e.g. *The Green Linnet*); homely, meek, glad (e.g. *The Daisy*); Stark, bleak (e.g. *Small Celandine, Michael*); encouraging fortitude and hope, though in suffering (e.g. *Leech-gatherer*); mystic, diversely (e.g. *Lucy, The Wanderer*, but above all the poet). The dates of the poems, being simultaneous (roughly 1800-1807—the ripe period of his creativity), suggest that Wordsworth's mind had been at the same time moving across the different aspects of loneliness. However, it is possible to trace a kind of lateral development in them from simple Idealism to ideas of suffering, to spiritual function associated with solitude, with the "poets" mysticism standing as the culminating point. The despondent, negative, gloomy loneliness of the Solitary (notwithstanding his inspired moments) suggests that by 1814 (the date of publication of *The Excursion*), when Wordsworth's Inspiration had flagged for whatever reason or reasons—he may have looked at another aspect and split

himself into two : so that The Solitary had to be created though to be corrected by The Wanderer and others.

What, one may ask, was the reason of this obsession with loneliness and lonely figures ? It is possible that after his disillusion, after Annette Vallon, after the French Revolution, Wordsworth had a feeling of alienation from external stimuli for inspiration. He might have tried to look at his own alienation from different angles and sublimate it in the different lonely figures. Whether that be true or not, the obsession appears to have turned these figures of loneliness collectively into a figure in another sense—a metaphor—through which he translated his views of life.

One thing however stands prominent ; the poet is the most central solitary figure. He had visitations and visions in loneliness, the like of which had come too often to Man in the earlier days, throughout the world, and which he (the primitive man) tried to explain by creating rich myths, giving each like experience and sensation "a local habitation and a name". Although Wordsworth could not offer to the sophisticated nineteenth century the wonderful raptures of primitive myths, the fact that his imagination was similarly emancipated in exalted lonely moments of inspiration is surely suggestive. Secondly, we cannot just overlook one fact : he shared his own loneliness with his solitaries (no matter if they are his own projections). He learned to feel with them, whose hearts he could read like "open books", and it is this "widest commonality felt" which had opened his vision of the Infinite. And including himself in the gallery of the lonely figures Wordsworth has flung the dimensions of his poetic world to further reaches, which is rarely to be found among the English poets.⁴

NOTES

1. Somehow this poem reminds of "The Small Celandine" and of the Story of Margaret (*Excursion*, 1814 edition : Bk. I, p. 756 ff.) Is it by way of contrast ?—or does it reveal the Poet's development of mind—from despair generating in bitterness to hope rising up from the ashes of despondency ?

2. There is no sufficient scope here for dealing with Solitary Spots of Time and Solitary Places—also found interspersed in Wordsworth's poetry—specially in the Prelude.

3. There is also the Pastor (*Excursion* Bk. V. pp. 822-37) who later gives an eloquent "account of the harmonising Influence of Solitude upon two men of opposite principles" (Bk. VI). Both these figures (Wanderer and Solitary) are projections of two types of the poet. (The Poet himself is one of the four characters of the poem). But space does not permit to dwell on all the Books of the *Excursion*.

4. A random selection of some other characteristic poems where lonely figures are found : (i) 'Characteristics of a Child Three years old' (ii), 'Alice Fell,' (iii) 'Lucy Gray,' (iv) 'We are Seven,' (v) 'The Norman Boy,' (vi) 'The Poet's Dream,' (vii) 'Stanzas' (The Boy figure), (viii) 'The Forsaken Indian Woman,' : 'The Complaint,' (ix) 'Affliction of Margaret,' (x) 'The Childless Father,' (xi) 'The Idiot Boy,' (xii) 'The Widow of Windermere,' (xiii) 'Her eyes are wild,' (xiv) 'The Danish Boy,' (xv) 'Nutting,' (xvi) 'Ruth,' (xvii) 'The Thorn,' (xviii) 'Laodamia,' (xix) 'Simon Lee,' (xx) 'The Happy Warrior,' (xxi) 'I know an aged Man' etc : also a large number strewn in the pages of *The Prelude* and elsewhere.

WORDSWORTH THE *KAVI* AND HIS RELEVANCE TODAY

PRADIP BHATTACHARYA

'The Irrelevance of Wordsworth Today' was one of the papers read out at a recent inter-collegiate seminar held on the occasion of Wordsworth's birth bi-centenary. The speaker, Miss Tilottama Mukherjee of Loreto College, argued that conditions had changed so completely since Wordsworth's times that nothing he had said could be meaningful in the context of the present human situation. It has been frequently argued that in his view of religion and society Wordsworth is severely hedged in by many walls of convention which make him more a poet of his age than of the future. However, it is what the poet sees and feels, not what he intellectually formulates, which is the real essence of his poetry. And what Wordsworth, the seer-poet, saw and felt is, we shall see, of great significance to an age in which, fed up with technological culture, man is groping for something which will give meaning to life, make it worth living, give it a sense of direction and purpose. The occasion of the bi-centenary of his birth provides us with an excellent opportunity for recognising, at long last, that Wordsworth is the first seer-poet in English literature, the first English *kavi*. To the ancients it was obvious that poetry is, in reality, not so much a "making", a composition, as a revelation of something which eternally exists¹. Knowing this, they used the same word to describe the poet and prophet, the creator and seer: *vates*, *sophos*, *kavi*. Wordsworth himself is fully conscious of the revelatory and inspirational nature of poetry²:

If thou partake the animating faith
That poets, even as Prophets, each with each
Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,
Have each his own peculiar faculty,
Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to perceive
Objects unseen before...
A privilege whereby a work of his,
Proceeding from a source of untaught things,
Creative and enduring...

It is not surprising that this aspect of Wordsworth should so long have been neglected. The Occidental *weltanschauung* regards the external life of the mind and the senses as alone of importance, as the sole reality. Hence it sees the mystic as one who gets lost in a self-made chimerical world of visions and hallucinations. It is argued that the mystic's experiences are purely subjective and not scientifically verifiable, hence they are unreal and irrational. To the Western mind, the truths the mystic speaks of are either unintelligible, or are regarded as nebulous abstractions and poetic fancies. Thus it has been the fate of the mystic in the West to be, at best, taken notice of superficially, condescendingly, by "self-applauding intellects"⁸ who

Effeminately level down the truth

To certain general notions ..

Through want of better knowledge in the heads

That framed them.⁴

What is frequently forgotten is that the mystic's goal is to acquire knowledge of his soul and of the supreme Truth of creation : a knowledge which cannot be arrived at by an approach based on the senses and on surface-reality. Such an insight is only possible through an inward gaze, through an intuitive contact with the Truth itself, or through direct knowledge by identification of the mystic's *atman* with the *Brahman*. In other words, for appreciating a mystic like Wordsworth, what is required is not the Occidental but the Oriental view of life.

It is only natural, therefore, that the first recognition of the *kavi* Wordsworth should have come from the East, from another seer-poet, Sri Aurobindo, in his regrettably short study of the great Romantic in his *The Future Poetry*⁵. More recently, in 1970 itself, there have been, in India, two remarkable appreciations of the significance of Wordsworth. One is a poem, "To William Wordsworth", by one of the finest of our young poets, Sukanta Chaudhuri⁶. The other is a brilliant study of Wordsworth in the January and February issues of *Mother India* by Mr K. D. Sethna. Mr Sethna, incidentally, provides us with an excellent definition of the *kavi*⁷ : "One who has known by direct intuition and by intimate personal realisation and by concrete entry of consciousness a Divine Reality at once emanating, containing and pervading the universe, an Existence that is an infinite Consciousness and eternal Bliss and the secret Self of all things and beings." Unfortunately, neither Sri Aurobindo, nor Mr Sethna have discussed this aspect of Wordsworth at length. In the present study, I propose to approach Wordsworth from the view-point of Hindu mysticism because, approached from this angle, his poetry becomes crucially relevant and meaningful for the

modern man in search for a richer order than what mere technology can provide, for a more organic sense of meaning in life

At the outset it would be well to keep in mind that mysticism is not something which can be appreciated or experienced purely through the intellect, for the simple reason that knowledge based on the rational faculty cannot stretch beyond the mental domain. To extend it to infinity would be to snap it, as Yajnavalkya bluntly tells Gargi in reply to her incessant renewal of queries: "If you do not stop, your head will fall off."⁸ Mystic truth must be approached through the heart, which is to guide and inspire the mind. This heart is not, of course, the external seat of emotions, but the *antarhrdaya* of the Upanishads, the secret inner spark of divine consciousness which is the source, the fount of our true personality. This is what lies behind Wordsworth's statement that "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings". And when he says that it "takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility", he is referring to the withdrawal of the consciousness into a secret, subtle inner world, and its re-appearance with the treasures gathered there⁹. Genuine poetry, as Wordsworth well knew, cannot be produced by intellectual labour.

It should also be kept in mind that mystic experiences are not imaginary mathematical abstractions like $\sqrt{-1}$. What to the ordinary understanding is a metaphysical abstraction, or a nebulous poetic fancy, is to the mystic an intimate and concrete reality: "To the mystic there is no such thing as an abstraction. Everything which to the intellectual mind is abstract, has a concreteness, substantiality, which is more real than the sensible form of an object or of a physical event...The mystical poet can only describe what he has felt, seen in himself or others, or in the world, just as he has felt or seen it or experienced through exact vision, close contact or identity and leave it to the general reader to understand or not understand or misunderstand according to his capacity."¹⁰ The last two alternatives, unfortunately, have been the bane of both Wordsworth's and Sri Aurobindo's poetry among the majority of readers, despite their assurance that they are

Speaking no dream, but things oracular ;

Matter not lightly to be heard by those

Who to the letter of the outward promise

Do read the invisible soul.¹¹

To approach Wordsworth from the standpoint of Indian mysticism is to be surprised by joy, for here in an alien culture we discover a kindred spirit, and the East and the West merge in the oneness of mystical experiences. Unlike the Occidental artist, the Oriental concentrates only

on those facets, those objects of external nature which "while charming him, give rise to an inner vision or experience in him".¹³ It is, as Wordsworth writes in his Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, "The feeling therein developed (which) gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feelings" the latter being the case with English poetry up to his times. What is even more remarkable is how Sri Aurobindo's description of the artist with spiritual vision perfectly fits Wordsworth¹⁴ : "Behind a few figures, a few trees, and rocks, the supreme Intelligence, the supreme Imagination, the supreme Energy lurks, acts, feels, is, and, if the artist has the spiritual vision, he can see it and suggest perfectly the great mysterious Life... full of a mastering intention in that which appears blind and unconscious". And this is Wordsworth at the beginning of Book IX of *The Excursion* :

To every Form of Being is assigned...
 An active Principle :—howe'er removed
 From sense and observation, it subsists
 In all things, in all natures ; in the stars
 Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,
 In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone
 That paves the brooks, the stationary rocks,
 The moving waters, and the invisible air..
 Spirit that knows no insulated spot,
 No chasm, no solitude ; from link to link
 It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds.

Earlier, in *The Prelude*, Book III, ll. 127-132, he speaks of the same vision in personal terms :

To every natural form, rock, fruit or flower,
 Even the loose stones that cover the highway,
 I gave a moral life : I saw them feel,
 Or linked to some feeling : the great mass
 Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all
 That I beheld respired with inward meaning,—

and again in Book II (ll. 401-409) :

I felt the sentiment of Being spread
 O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still ;
 O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought
 And human knowledge, to the human eye
 Invisible, yet liveth to the heart :
 O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and sings,
 Or beats the gladsome air ; o'er all that glides

Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,
And mighty depth of waters.

It is precisely this spiritual revelation which Arjuna obtains from Lord Krishna : "I am taste in the waters, O son of Kunti, I am the light of sun and moon, I am pranava in all the Vedas, sound in ether and manhood in men. I am pure scent in earth and energy of light in fire ; I am life in all existences, I am the ascetic force of those who do askes is. Know Me to be the eternal seed of all existences, O son of Pritha. I am the intelligence of the intelligent, the energy of the energetic. I am the strength of the strong devoid of desire and liking. I am in beings, the desire which is not contrary to dharma, O Lord of the Bharatas."¹⁴ " I, O Gudakesha, am the self which abides within all beings. I am the beginning and middle and end of all beings . And whatsoever is the seed of all existences, that am I, O Arjuna ; nothing moving or unmoving, animate or inanimate in the world can be without Me."^{14a}

It has always intrigued readers why natural objects thrilled Wordsworth so deeply and moved him so powerfully. "Panttheism" is not a very satisfactory way of explaining what is hinted at in these lines from his "Written in Early Spring" ;

And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes...
The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air ;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

What lies behind this has been brought out clearly by a greater *kavi* while describing the tender sapling shooting upwards from its underground prison¹⁵ :

A blissful yearning riots in its leaves,
A magic passion trembles in its blooms,
Its boughs aspire in hushed felicity.
An occult godhead of this beauty is cause,
The spirit and intimate guest of all this charm,
This sweetness's priestess and this reverie's muse.
Invisibly protected from our sense
The Dryad lives drenched in a deeper ray
And feels another air of storms and calms
And quivers inwardly with mystic rain. (italics mine)

When Wordsworth speaks of seeing that Nature not only beautifies the inner being of her charges, but that she

wants not the power
 To consecrate, if we have eyes to see,
 The outside of her creatures, and to breathe
 Grandeur upon the very humblest face
 Of human life,—¹⁸

he is echoing the Indian mystic vision of the Divine love and joy which pulsates through all creation, the common and the shabby no less than the lofty and the beautiful, uplifting all :

I heard

From mouths of men obscure and lowly, truths
 Replete with honour...
 There saw into the depth of human souls,
 Souls that appear to have no depth at all
 To careless eyes.¹⁹

Is it not akin to what Krishna tells Arjuna :²⁰ "Deluded minds despise me lodged in the human body because they know not my supreme nature of being, Lord of all existences"?

Further, when Wordsworth confidently states that because of such mystic insights into the Truth behind the surface-reality, brought about through contact with Nature,

The Genius of the Poet hence
 May boldly take his way among mankind
 Wherever Nature leads—²¹

he is not sentimentally deluding himself. Here is another mystic poet who asserts a kindred faith in Nature, and his enumeration of the different experiences brought about through natural communion are remarkably parallel to Wordsworth's²²: "It is always through the creations of Nature, through her bountiful gifts and graces that art steals into our heart. At first it is an enjoyment of the creations of Nature ('drinking in a pure/Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths/Of curling mist'²³) and then an experience of the aesthetic delight ('never dreamt of aught/More grand, more fair, more exquisitely framed/Than those few nooks ..'²⁴), and, last a concentration on the experience giving birth to the creative impulse ('An auxiliar light/Came from my mind, which on the setting sun/Bestowed new splendour'²⁵)."

The question naturally arises as to what the process was by which Wordsworth came to experience such mystic insights. The indications of the process which we discover from his poetry are exactly analogous to that described by our ancient *rishis*. According to the Hindu philosophers, there is a sixth sense, a master-sense, the *manas*²⁶, which generally uses the sense-organs for gaining experiences, yet is capable of

going beyond them for a direct perception when the sense-organs are silenced. This intuitive grasp of knowledge is the result of identification with the object of perception. The consciousness is said to possess a dual power : the power of apprehension (*prajnana*) and the power of comprehension (*vijnana*)³⁵. Prajnana sets the object of apprehension away, separate from itself, grasping only the surface reality because the mind is capable only of this. Vijnana, on the other hand, embraces the object within itself, penetrating to its very essence by wholly identifying itself with it, thus becoming it, living it, loving it. That is why the mystic's knowledge is part of his very being, not a knowledge abstract and remote, but living, intimate and concrete, pulsating with a "bliss ineffable" :

high the transport, great the joy I felt,
Communing in this sort through earth and heaven
With every form of creature, as it looked
Towards the Uncreated with a countenance
Of adoration, with an eye of love.³⁶

These are the moments when the *kavi's* soul visits
moon-flame oceans of swift fathomless Bliss...

We meet the ecstasy of the Godhead's touch
In golden privacies of immortal fire.³⁷

It is a state which the Gita describes as "That in which the soul knows its own true and exceeding bliss, which is perceived by the intelligence (i.e. not the intellect but the *manas*) and is beyond the sense, wherein established, it can no longer fall away from the spiritual truth of its being" (VI.21).

If we go through Wordsworth's "There was a Boy" and De Quincey's description of the Dunmail Raise episode³⁸, the process by which Wordsworth came to have these experiences becomes clear. De Quincey tells us that on Dunmail Raise, Wordsworth frequently put his ear to the ground to catch the rumbling of wheels far off. Once, as he was rising from the ground, he suddenly saw a bright star, and for several moment stood looking at it intently, and then remarked : "I have remarked, from my earliest days, that, if under any circumstances the attention is energetically braced up to an act of steady observation, should suddenly relax, at that moment any beautiful, any impressive visual object, or collection of objects, falling upon the eye, is carried to the heart with a power not known under other circumstances...the bright star..fell suddenly upon my eye and penetrated my capacity of apprehension with a pathos and a sense of the infinite, that would not have arrested me under other circumstances." Similarly, the

boy, mimicking the hoots of owls, waits anxiously for the riotous response :

The, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain-torrents ; or the visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

What is happening here is, that at first the *manas* makes contact, as usual, through the external senses and then takes over for a direct comprehension of the inner truth of things by using the inner senses (*sukshma-indriya*). Such direct cognisance is usually impossible when the external senses are functioning and has to be brought about by "throwing the waking mind into a state of sleep which liberates the true or subliminal mind."⁸⁰ In the instances described above, the sudden shock of surprise induces a certain break in the normal functioning of Wordsworth's external senses :

the light of sense
Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed
The invisible world.⁸⁰

At such moments all creation seems to be singing its adoration of the Divine :

One song they sang, and it was audible,
Most audible then when the fleshly ear
O'ercome by humblest prelude of that strain
Forgot her functions, and slept undisturbed.⁸¹

And thus he perceives that invisible mystic reality which
lost beyond the reach of thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart.⁸²

The intellect itself is stilled at such moments :

in such high hour
Of visitation from the Living God,
Thought was not.⁸³

The most detailed description of such experiences is given in "Tintern Abbey" :

that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight

Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened :—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul :
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

The validity of such a *samadhi* state can be easily tested by comparing Wordsworth's account of his experiences with what Hindu philosophy has to say about such phenomenon. Sankaracharya, commenting on the *Gita*, VI, 20, says: "When the confusing play of ideas and emotions has come to rest, and he thus through himself (without the senses) through the purified 'inner organ' (the *manas*) apprehends the Highest, which is wholly spirit, essentially light, then he wins through to joy."⁸⁴ The *Gita* itself is even clearer in VIII. 12-13: "All the doors of the senses closed, the mind shut in into the heart, the life-force taken up out of its diffused movement into the head, the intelligence concentrated in the utterance of the sacred syllable OM and its conceptive thought in the remembrance of the supreme Godhead, he who goes forth, abandoning the body, he attains to the highest status."

Wordsworth's experiences become yet more convincing and more intelligible when we see what India's greatest seer-poet writes in his epic *Savitri*. Like Wordsworth, he too asserts that this apparently "unintelligible world" does have a definite meaning and a clearly defined purpose,

But all is screened, subliminal, mystical ;
It needs the intuitive heart, the inward turn,
It needs the power of a spiritual gaze.
Else to our waking mind's small moment look
A goalless voyage seems our dubious course...⁸⁵

And he tells us, like Wordsworth, how this "spiritual gaze" works, and what it sees, in almost identical terms :

In the dead wall closing us from wider self,
Into a secrecy of apparent sleep,
The mystic tract beyond our waking thoughts,
A door parted, built in by Matter's force,
Releasing things unseized by earthly sense :
A world unseen, unknown by outward mind
Appeared in the silent spaces of the soul.⁸⁶

And

in some deep internal solitude
 Witnessed by a *strange immaterial sense*,
 The signals of eternity appear.
 The truth mind could not know unveils its face,
 We hear what mortal ears have never heard,
 We feel what earthly sense has never felt,
 We love what common hearts repel and dread ;
 Our minds hush to a bright Omniscient ;

A Voice calls from the chambers of the Soul.⁸⁷ (*italics mine*)

Again, like Wordsworth, Sri Aurobindo states that such truths are visible only when the intellect has stopped functioning :

A soul not wrapped in its cloak of mind
 Could glimpse the true sense of a world of forms,
 Upbuoyed by the heart's understanding flame,
 It could hold in the conscious ether of the spirit
 The divinity of a symbol universe.⁸⁸

All Nature was a conscious front of God :⁸⁹

Wordsworth, too, sees the entire natural world as a symbol of the Divine : the waterfalls, the woods, the forests, the torrents, the rocks and crags and raging streams, the unfettered clouds, night and day, all are to him

Characters of the great Apocalypse,
 The types and symbols of Eternity
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without end.⁴⁰

And again he speaks of

Nature's self, which is the breath of God,
 Or His pure Word, by miracle revealed.⁴¹

But these insights come only when unsought and cannot be arrived at by any conscious intellectual effort, as both the *kavis* assert firmly :

that happy stillness of mind
 Which fits him to receive it when unsought.⁴²
 This Light comes not by struggle or by thought ;
 In the mind's silence the Transcendent acts
 And the hushed heart hears the unuttered Word.⁴³

It is because Wordsworth discovers behind the object something more than what it appears to be, because he contacts the supreme Harmony underlying all creation, that he contends that even the lowliest of things, even the ass, the idiot boy, the leech-gatherer or the beggar can be subject-matter for the poet ; for in all he can discover and reveal the Beauty that is truly everywhere :

There saw into the depth of human souls,
Souls that appear to have no depth at all
To careless eyes.⁴⁴

This insight into the Divine Beauty in all things has been brilliantly expressed by Sri Aurobindo in the form of aphorisms⁴⁵ : "God had opened my eyes ; for I saw the nobility of the vulgar, the attractiveness of the repellent, the perfection of the maimed and the beauty of the hideous. When the divine Reality is seen behind external deformations, it appears so powerfully that it succeeds in effacing what generally veils it to the ordinary mind...*When I had the dividing Reason I shrank from many things* ; after I had lost it in sight, I hunted through the world for the ugly and the repellent but I could no longer find them." This mystic perception, along with the solitude, stark majesty and utter simplicity which characterised his spiritual experiences, lie behind Wordsworth's revolutionary decision to choose the rude, simple rustics as the subjects of his poems, and to use their bare yet pregnant language as the vehicle of his ideas and emotions.

It is, indeed, highly significant that almost all of Wordsworth's mystic experiences are connected with mountain-scenery. The *Prelude* teems with such instances, and, in general, mountains appear in the background and setting of the best of his poetry, as in "Nutting", "The Highland Reaper", "Daffodils", "To the Cuckoo", and so on. The reason for this lies partly in the solemn spell cast by the grand solitude and stark, chaste majesty of the mountains. Arnold's remark that Wordsworth's poetry "is bald as the bare mountain tops are bald, with a baldness which is full of grandeur",⁴⁶ is a remarkably perceptive comment indeed. However, beyond this obvious fact, there is also a symbolic significance of the mountain which is probably the real cause of its ubiquitous presence in Wordsworth's inspired poetry. The mountain's soaring pyramidal height, reaching up to sky, is a mystic symbol of the human consciousness aspiring towards the Divine Consciousness, all human faculties concentrating and rising to that single intense peak of single-minded aspiration. This is by no means as fanciful an interpretation as it might seem to be at first. It is supported by a spiritual seer of the stature of Sri Aurobindo who adopted as part of his symbol this very pyramidal structure reaching upwards in a straining for the Infinite. And, it while climbing up a mountain-side that Wordsworth has one of his most memorable experiences, set-off by the sudden sight of

The Moon hung naked in a firmament
Of azure without a cloud, and at my feet

Rested a silent sea of hoary mist ..
 There I beheld the emblem of a mind
 That feeds upon infinity ..⁴⁷

In harmony with this background of mountain-scenery, Wordsworth sets his figures in solitude and silence, as, for instance, the solitary reaper, Lucy who "dwelt among the untrodden ways", the leech-gatherer, Michael, Wordsworth himself, wandering "lonely as a cloud", fascinated by solitary cliffs and "Souls of lonely places"⁴⁸ and by scenes

When vapours rolling down the valley made
 A lonely scene more lonesome. .⁴⁹

And his projected magnum opus had as its theme Wordsworth
 On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life
 Musing in solitude...⁵⁰

Along with solitary surroundings goes the insistence on simplicity. Wordsworth chooses rustic life for his theme because there the elemental passions "co-exist in a state of greater simplicity" and speak "a plainer and more emphatic language", as he writes in his *Preface*. The emphasis on simplicity is rubbed home through the iteration of the word "naked" in his poetry. To contact the Divine Reality, the mind must be stripped bare of all non-essentials :

Gently did my soul
 Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted, stood
 Naked as in the presence of her God.⁵¹

A mystic vision is inspired by the sight of the moon as it "hung naked in a firmament". It seems Wordsworth perceived the still mind as "naked" of its normal movements, thus enabling a direct comprehension of the object's essence by his soul. Besides this, he speaks of naked huts, naked pools, naked valleys, a naked crag, the naked top of a headland, and so on, using the word nearly a hundred times—at a random count—in the *Prelude* itself.

We may now proceed to discuss the two possible paths to mystic experiences mentioned in Hindu philosophy⁵² : the inward or introspective vision (soul-mysticism) and the outward way of unifying vision (*Brahman*-mysticism). Often the two ways can merge into one as it is realised that the *Ekam-Brahman* in and behind the creation is also the inner psychic being, the *atman* (*sa atma ; tat tvam asi ;*—'That is the self ; That art thou'). This realization finds expression in the Yajnavalkya-Maitrayee discourse in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, as also in the *Gita*, XIII. 16 : "That which is in us is he-

and all that we experience outside ourselves is he. The inward and the outward, the far and the near, the moving and the unmoving, all this he is at once. He is the subtlety of the subtle which is beyond our (intellectual) knowledge." Wordsworth expresses the same fusion of the two visions in this fragment retrieved by Mr H. de Selincourt⁵³

One interior life

In which all beings live with God, themselves
Are God, existing in the mighty whole,
As undistinguishable as the cloudless east
At noon is from the cloudless west, when all
The hemisphere is one cerulean blue.

In our Indian *Kavi*, we find the same fusion : —

The supreme's gaze looked out through human eyes
And saw all things and creatures as itself
And knew all thought and word as its own voice.^{53a}

In the first way, the introspective way, one sinks inward in order to find the true self, the *atman*, which leads to contacting the Divine Reality (*atmani atmanam atmana*). For this experience, one withdraws oneself from all sense-impressions and thought activity, as Wordsworth and Sri Aurobindo describe :

turning the mind in upon herself ..felt
Incumbencies more awful, visitings
Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul
That tolerates the indignities of Time,
And, from the centre of Eternity
All finite motions overruling, lives
In glory immutable.⁵⁴

And sometimes, when our sight is turned within,
Earth's ignorant veil is lifted from our eyes...
A stillness falls upon the instruments...
Knowledge breaks through trailing its radiant seas...
In moments when the inner lamps are lit
And the life's cherished guests are left outside.
Our spirit sits alone and speaks to its gulfs...
Invading from spiritual silences
A ray of the timeless Glory stoops awhile
To commune with our seized illumined clay
And leaves its huge white stamp upon our lives...
It leaves us one with Nature and with God.⁵⁵

The other way, that of the unifying vision (*ekata-drishti*), sees the

whole universe as the One. In the words of the *Gita*: "His hands and feet are on every side of us, his heads and eyes and faces are those innumerable visages which we see wherever we turn, his ear is everywhere, he immeasurably fills and surrounds all this world with himself, he is the universal Being in whose embrace we live" (XIII, 14). And again in X, 39: "And whatsoever is the seed of all existences, that am I, O Arjuna; nothing moving or unmoving, animate or inanimate in the world can be without Me." Wordsworth expresses this in "Tintern Abbey" as:

a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

The next stage in this outward way is the identification of the perceiver with the perceived, seeing all things in himself, or, more precisely, as himself (*anyad na pasyati*: 'he perceives no other'):

Oft in these moments such a holy calm
Would overspread my soul that bodily eyes
Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw
Appeared like something in myself, a dream,
A prospect in the mind.⁵⁰

Wordsworth repeats this in his introductory note to the "Ode on Intimations of Immortality": "I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from but inherent in my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality." The last sentence is very significant. It is this reluctance to commit himself whole-heartedly to his mystic experiences, this constant effort to return to sensory and rational reality, which was to prove the bane of Wordsworth's poetry. As he grew older, the dependence on reason increased, the intellectuality gradually obfuscated his intuitive mystic vision more and more till the 'visionary gleam' died away in a desert of moralising and dry, sterile ideas.

The third stage reached through the Unifying vision is to see the One not just as the essence of many, as in the first stage, but also as the great supporting principle of the universe. The many are its various

facets while it remains the eternal unchanging foundation : "I am here in this world and everywhere, I support this entire universe", says the *Gita*, X. 42. Or, as the *Isa Upanishad* says at the very beginning "The world is a garment, or dwelling-place, for the informing and governing Spirit." Wordsworth describes it as :

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe I
Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought,
That givest to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion...⁵⁷

What is interesting about Wordsworth, however, is that, unlike Sankaracharya, he did not proceed from this step to the final negative stage of asserting that the One cannot be the many, and that hence all creation is *maya*, an illusion. It is Wordsworth's great contribution that he reconciles the spiritual and the sensory worlds. It is through the mighty world of eye and ear—the light of setting suns, the round ocean, the living air, the blue sky and the mind of man—that he contacts the Divine Reality, not independently of them. He is, like his own skylark, "True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home". Though he never soars, like Shelley, out of touch with the sensory world, he does not make the mistake of limiting his concept of reality purely to that which the senses and intellect apprehend. It is this admirable sense of balance which makes him so relevant to all times, and so akin to an Oriental seer like Sri Aurobindo who does not believe in an ascetic withdrawal from the world, but aims at divinising this human life.

In the world of today we find the West getting more and more disillusioned with purely materialistic existence, searching blindly for something beyond the sense-world which will give meaning, give some sense of order to the welter of chaos which is life. I quote from a recent article by a contemporary American journalist : "The '70s are seeing the American launched on a curiously un-American quest. He has order—the order of the machine and the punch card, the order he once thought he wanted—and he is sick to death of all the well-oiled predestination. He is off and hunting for a richer order than technology can provide, a more organic sense of meaning. Confusedly, belatedly, he is searching for something very like his soul."⁵⁸ Paradoxically, an inordinate stress on what is external has brought about a recoil and disgust for it. Again, in its wide and eager curiosity, the modern age has neglected the inner movement which leads to what lies behind the material reality, and is consequently marred by a superficial, and at best, a sophisticated intellection. A peculiar aridity seems to permeate the

modern consciousness : the *joie de vivre*, that which made life fresh, green and happy, seems to be lost. "Cut away from the soul, from the central fount of its being, the human consciousness has been, as it were, desiccated and pulverized ; it has been thrown wholly upon its multifarious external movements and bears the appearance of a thirsty shifting expanse of desert sands."⁵⁹ In the phenomenon of the "flower-people" we see an effort to recapture man's pristine intimate contact with nature, without which he has become a bundle of nerves and frustrations, harassed (as Wordsworth was long back) by the incessant din and tension of a technological civilization. The Western youth searches for a way out with the help of drugs, trying to forget the body and the mind in a world of hallucinatory visions, which only leave behind an intense depression and a vital craving for more sensation, without giving anything permanent to hold on to. What, then, is the solution ? The only lasting remedy, as our ancient philosopher-seers well knew, can come from within us. As Sri Nolini Kanta Gupta writes in his profound essay, "The Malady of the Century" : "To relieve life of this mingled strain and tension, to lift it out of this ambiguity and uncertainty, to free it from this gravitational force that drives it towards what is superficial and external—to endow it with its real worth, we must find and possess life at a higher level, at its unspoilt source ; we must first draw back and re-establish, this time consciously and integrally, the lost connection with our soul, the Divine in our being".^{59a} And the great Indian seer says the same things :

The outward and the immediate are our field,
 The dead past is our background and support ;
 Mind keeps the soul prisoner, we are slaves to our acts ;
 We cannot free our gaze to reach wisdom's sun ..
 Absorbed in a routine of daily acts,
 Our eyes are fixed on an external scene...
 Thus is the meaning of creation veiled ;
 For without context reads the cosmic page :
 Its signs stare at us like an unknown script ..
 It wears to the perishable creature's eyes
 The grandeur of a useless miracle ..
 Yet a foreseeing knowledge might be ours,
 If we could take our spirit's stand within,
 If we could hear the muffled daemon voice...
 We must fill the immense lacuna we have made,
 Re-wed the closed finite's lonely consonant
 With the open vowels of Infinity,

A hyphen must connect Matter and Mind,
The narrow isthmus of the ascending soul.⁶⁰

Wordsworth, in his own way, brings to the West this mystic message of the East, backing up ancient truths with the validity of his personal experiences : once the soul knows itself, it establishes a state of bliss which nothing can destroy.⁶¹ Wordsworth has shown that this contact with the soul can be achieved through the means of constant receptivity to the beauty and grandeur of natural scenery, which can induce mystic trances in which one comprehends :

truths that wake

To perish never :

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,

(which plague the modern age)

Nor Man nor Boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,

Can utterly abolish or destroy !⁶²

In this union of Nature's soul and Man's mind and the Spirit which has its dwelling in the light of setting suns and in the mind of man, there is solace even for the acute existentialist *angst* of modern times. The solution offered by Wordsworth the *kavi* does not depend on external means, but on an inner change. It is a concept re-iterated innumerable times in Hindu philosophy and reasserted memorably in our own age by Sri Aurobindo. And it is because of his concrete spiritual experiences that Wordsworth can state so confidently his firm belief that the man

Who, in this spirit, communes with the Forms

Of nature, who with understanding heart

Both knows and loves such objects as excite

No morbid passions, and no hatred—needs must feel

The joy of that pure principle of love

So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught

Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose

But seek for objects of a kindred love

In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.

Accordingly he by degrees perceives

His feelings of aversion softened down ;

A holy tenderness pervade his frame...

he looks round

And seeks for good ; and finds the good he seeks :

Until abhorrence and contempt are things

He only knows by name ..

and has no thought,

No feeling, which can overcome his love...
 That change shall clothe
 The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore
 The burthen of existence...
 So build we up the Being that we are ;
 Thus deeply drinking-in the soul of things,
 We shall be wise perforce ..
 Whate'er we see,
 Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine ;
 Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral strength,
 Earthly desires ; and raise, to loftier heights
 Of divine love, our intellectual soul.⁶³

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THE TRAGIC ESSENCE OF SAINT JOAN

BEDASRUTI DAS

The tragedy of Shaw's Joan is not the tragedy of a saint but a genius, a country maid of exceptional intellectual vivacity and powerful intuitions. The basic fallacy of the critics lies in their apparent consideration of Joan as a saint, whose ideas come from a divine agent, namely God. It is for this reason Mr. Martz is reluctant to judge the play by Aristotelian principles (as a saint's death on an elevated plane is a spiritual victory over the material world and hence not tragic) and finds an altogether different kind of tragic experience in the play accepting Joan as a saint". To see these plays (*Saint Joan* and *Murder in the Cathedral*) as in any sense tragic it seems that *we must abandon the concept of a play built upon an ideal Aristotelian hero, and look instead for a tragic experience that arise from the interaction between a hero who represents the secret cause, and the other characters who represent the human sufferers*". But Shaw's Joan is essentially a human character. She is a genius, whose ideas come from *within*. She fully satisfies the chief requisites of an Aristotelian hero. *Hubris* or pride (It is the chastisement of *hubris* as the Archbishop puts it), merged in extreme self-confidence, is the tragic flaw or *Hamartia* of Joan's character. The main purpose of the article is to explore the truth that the tragedy of Joan occurs on a human level rather than on any heightened plane of saints.

Joan is essentially conceived by Shaw as a genius. Shaw, in the Preface, defines a genius in the following words : "A genius is a person who, seeing further and probing deeper than other people, has a different set of ethical valuations from theirs, and has energy enough to give effect to this extra vision and its valuations in whatever manner best suits his or her specific talents". Her genius cultivated mainly in masculine departments, particularly in 'soldiering and politics'. With a mild satire on the present day educated women, Shaw esteems Joan in high praise. "She understood the political and military situation in France much better than most of our newspaper-fed university women-graduates understand the corresponding situation of their own country today". With this sharp untutored intellect of a genius, Joan possesses a vivid imagination which leads to a serious misunderstanding as regards

the source of her mature, fruitful ideas. Shaw writes, "There are people in the world whose imagination is so vivid that when they have an idea it comes to them as an audible voice, sometimes uttered by a visible figure." Joan mistakenly conceived her ideas to have come from some divine agents. But Shaw considers these 'inspirations and intuitions' as unconsciously reasoned conclusions of genius, whereas, these came to Joan as 'an instruction from her counsel, as she called her visionary saints; but she was nonetheless an able leader of men for imagining ideas in this way.' This unawareness of her self (and the misunderstanding due to it) is, in fact, the cause of her tragic end. Truly, *The tragedy of Joan emerges out of the sharp juxtaposition of illusion and reality; what Joan thought herself to be and what she really was*. The cause lies *within* Joan. Joan's burning as a heretic rests primarily on the consideration of her illusory visions (which she deliberately defends as true) to be false. Even the act of canonization, the compensation of the fault that caused her tragic end, remains within the spell of this illusions; the church pays due homage to Joan the saint (considering her visions to be true) and not to Joan the genius. "A saint is one who having practised heroic virtues, and enjoyed revelations or powers of the order which the church classes technically as supernatural, is eligible for canonization", writes Shaw in his preface. But the fact that 'the voices and the visions are illusory and *their wisdom all Joan's own* is shown by the occasions on which they failed her, notably during her trial, when they assured her that she would be rescued'. Why Joan is affected by such an illusion is an important issue at present. In fact, Joan's intellectual potentialities were too great to be explained in the simple background of ignorant villagers. Even Joan herself could not possibly go beyond the limitation of such a background; she failed to recognize her real being. Hence a villager's deep-rooted, blind faith in God makes her believe in her voices or vision. This is the simple way she tried to explain her situation.

II

Initially, Joan appears to be a girl of vital energy, tempered by her sweet and persuasive nature. It is not so much by her apparently miraculous power that she wins the hearts of Robert de Baudricourt and his men, but her natural affection is of greater influence. She loves others and is thereby loved by them. Her fruitful intuitive speculations and extreme self-confidence clearly convince them of her potentialities. She triumphs. Robert offers her the necessary aids she expected from him.

With a note of introduction from Robert, she is received in the French court by Charles, even against the violent opposition raised by the Archbishop and others. But she persuades the Archbishop not by asserting herself as the messenger of God but by paying undeserved respect to him. With humble submission she pleads, "*My Lord : I am only a poor country girl ; and you are filled with the blessedness and glory of God Himself ; but you will touch me with your hands, and give me your blessing, wont you ?*" The Archbishop is so much touched by her words that he sensitively yields to her defence, as he misunderstands the court's smile to be a mockery against Joan.

"Gentlemen ! your levity is rebuked by this maid's faith, I am God help me, all unworthy ; but your mirth is a deadly sin".

That Joan could not rise above human stature becomes evident in her surprised gesture to the fashionable Duchess ; "Joan. Be that Queen ?

Charles. No. She thinks she is.

Joan. (again staring after the Duchess. Oo-oo-oh I,

(Her awe-struck amazement at the figure cut by the magnificently dressed lady is not wholly complimentary.)"

The miraculous power of Joan is of negligible importance to Charles ("I dont want a message"); Joan could impress Charles only with the assurance of his confirmed right on the land as a king ! "Charles ; I come from the land, and have gotten my strength working on the land ; and I tell thee that the land is thine to rule righteously—".

Joan's militant spirit gains its full-fledged exposition in her besieging of Orleans. Comparing Joan with Lawrence, of Arabia, Ruth Adam writes, "Like Lawrence, Joan united a scattered and demoralized nation to turn the occupying invaders out of their country"¹. Her masculine quality of leadership fascinatingly draws Dunois' admiration. Dunois is far less interested in her as 'a servant of God' than as an able soldier ; he is moved when Joan says, "I will never take a husband. A man in Toul took an action against me for breach of promise ; but I never promised him. I am a soldier : I do not want to be thought of as a woman. I will not dress as a woman. I do not care for the things women care for. They dream of lovers and of money. I dream of leading a charge, and of placing the big guns. You soldiers do not know how to use the big guns : you think you can win battles with a great noise and smoke".

Audrey Williamson almost approaches the truth when he writes that 'one was conscious without question of a girl (Joan) with the physical resources of a born soldier and campaigner, plus the mental qualities of that make for the strategist and general of original genius. Her mind

struck fire out of the play, like metal against a tinder; and the fire was not only the *saint's fire* but the burning zeal of a human being a little in love—as Dunois says of her—with war. A picture of Joan without either facet the mystic and the soldier can never be a true one³. It is in fact, not the saint's fire received from any external agent but the fiery spirit of an original genius, with new and revolutionary ideas born *within* her, that is recognizable in Joan's character.

So far, we see that Joan's militant spirit and the sweet tongue of persuasiveness are more operative than her power of miracles (as others deduce from her words).

III

The novelty in Joan's humanitarian ideas shatters the then existing order in society; they particularly meet in direct clash with the feudal system and the Church principles. Mr. Homer E. Woodbridge clearly states Joan's situation: "To Stogumber Joan is a witch, because she has beaten the English; to Warwick she must be destroyed because she has appealed directly to kings over the heads of the great nobles; to Cauchon she is a dangerous heretic whose cult threatens the very life of the Church"⁴. There lies manifold interest, in reducing Joan's stature to mere heretic. Leaving all responsibilities to the Church others deliberately try to hide their cruel and selfish intentions.

With the lapse of time the situation changes. The sweet, persuasive tongue of Joan has now grown more assertive; she has become more demanding and dominating. Their individuality being shattered, people, though sympathetic toward Joan, turn hostile to her and, in fact, she finds none to defend her in the coronation scene,

She shares a tragic hero's weakness of *pride* and extreme self-confidence:

"The Archbishop. Pride will have a fall, Joan.

Joan. Oh, never mind whether it is pride or not: is it true? Is it commonsense?"

With this attitude she offends everyone in the Court: Dunois is irritated by Joan's ridiculous undermining of his credit as a soldier in besieging Orleans; she rouses the Archbishop's fury by asserting her superiority in regard to her closer communication with God; Charles is displeased as Joan pays no regard to her kingly authority:

Joan, at this phase, clearly appears to be an Aristotelian hero with the tragic flaw of pride and she is virtually caught in human situations.

IV

In the trial scene, Joan is more explicitly discovered in her natural human instincts ; pride, fear, a sense of superiority are there in her character. We find momentary flash of a petty and girlish affectation in Joan's idea of moving in society like a lady : "Nay. I am no shepherd lass, though I have helped with the sheep like anyone else. I will do a lady's work in the house—spin or weave against any woman in Rouen".

But, her dominating spirit of a soldier discards the proposition to live a feathery life like this :

"The Chaplain. If you are so clever at woman's work why do you not stay at home and do it ?

Joan. There are plenty of other women to do it ; but there is nobody to do my work".

A stubborn egoistic note is easily recognizable. Unlike a saint giving in the will of God, Joan seeks to rely absolutely on her own judgement : "What other judgement can I judge by but my own ?"

Joan sometimes reveals simple truths in a simple manner ; for instance, when the inquisitor, referring to the scriptures, says, "The simplicity of a darkened mind is no better than the simplicity of a beast" she wisely replies, "There is great wisdom in the simplicity of a beast,, let me tell you ; and sometimes great foolishness in the wisdom of scholars." The suggestive undertones in Joan's words rightly establishes her own case ; the wisdom of Joan is not the result of serious scholastic studies—it comes from *Within*. No external power or force acts on Joan to embody her wisdom ; it is all her natural genius. But, till the first part of the scene, she is under the spell of an illusion to believe that her wisdom comes to her in the form of voices or visions and is unusually assertive of it.

However, the illusion breaks and the real Joan is exposed when the voices failed to save her from mortal punishment : "Joan (despairingly). Oh, it is true, it is true : *my voices have deceived me*. I have been mocked by devils : my faith is broken."

From now onwards Joan appears to be more herself than before. No longer is her character confused by such a vague and incomprehensible idea as voices or visions. She is mortally *afraid* of being burnt alive and is thus ready to sign the form of recantation with the expectation of her freedom. This acceptance of human justice shows Joan in her human limitations. Further, the *romantic Joan's love for free-life makes her pathetically* (as she can never have it) *human* : "I could do without my warhouse ; I could drag about in a skirt ; I could let the banners and the trumpets and the knights and soldiers pass me

and leave me behind as they *leave* the other women, *if only I could still hear the wind in the trees, the larks in the sunshine*, the young lambs crying through the healthy frost, and the blessed church bells that send my angel voices floating to me on the wind. But without these things I cannot live ; and by your wanting to take them away from me, or from any human creature, I know that your counsel is of the devil and that mine is of God."

But she is denied of her desired freedom. What she said and did in the past is such a guilt to the Church authority that with a confession she may be excused of a death-sentence, but she cannot escape life-imprisonment. Joan's militant spirit revolts. She is not in the least inclined to lead the degraded life of a prisoner. Life seems to her meaningless without its *infinite varieties*. She snatches up the form of recantation and tears it into fragments. To most readers it may sound ridiculous, when she hysterically declares her voices as true. This taking back of the signed recantation rests more on a *personal cause* than on any superior *humanitarian cause*, which is quite contrary to situation of any *saint*. However, the result is her death ; she is burnt alive as a heretic.

Apparently the Epilogue of *Saint Joan* may seem to be a simple comic presentation of the play's whole cast, diminishing the tragic intensity of the play ; but by a more deeply penetrating study of its we recognise a solemn tragic touch in it. In the Epilogue, in fact, Joan's tragedy epitomizes the possible tragic suffering and tragic doom awaiting any genius in this narrow, selfish world of hostilities. The rehabilitation of Joan as a saint is not altogether complimentary to her. It is far less genuinely compensatory to the injustice done to Joan, as it basically rests on political motivation ; by establishing Joan as a saint. Charles confirms his legitimate claim to the royal throne. The tragic essence still whirls round Joan's memories. Whatever might have been the dramatist's symbolic implication, one can hardly ignore the essence of a personal tragedy Joan's tragedy. Charles, indeed, clearly understood the tragic situation of a genius who is socially misfit : "She was like nobody else : and she must take care of herself wherever she is ; for I cannot take care of her ; and neither can you, whatever you may think : you are not big enough. But I will tell you this about her. If you could bring her back to life, they would burn her again within six months, for all their present adoration of her (Epilogue)." The Epilogue, truly, universalizes Joan's tragedy.

V

Though forces of different social institutions are operative to bring the tragic end of Joan (her reactionary ideas attack them individually), yet the fatal blow comes to Joan *within* the Church. The church labels the charge against Joan and was prepared to spare Joan's life with a confession of her guilt. Joan's illusion that she received voices from God and her deliberate assertion of it is, indeed, the cause of her tragic doom. If she had realised that the inspirations and the wisdom were all her own, her situation would be different; at least, she would not die so tragically within the Church premises. The tragedy of Joan solely emerges from her illusion regarding self or the unawareness of her real being.

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RECENT TENDENCIES IN FICTIONAL THEORY *

AMITABHA SINHA

In the past two decades, there have been some attempts at a theoretical revaluation of the nature and function of prose fiction: my intention is to show how these bring forward a new aesthetic of the novel while stressing its individuality as a genre. These recent tendencies, however, do not radically break away from the preceding tradition of novelistic theory and criticism, but seek to modify it in certain respects. Therefore, before discussing the recent theories it is appropriate to make a brief revisit to this theoretical continuum to which they belong—since, however, the aim of this essay is interpretative, not bibliographical, I shall make a selective survey of only the watersheds, as it were.

The tradition that precedes the recent theories can be called the modern or avant-garde tradition; this, starting about the twenties as a development of its well-known notions of Henry James, is noted for its emphasis on the form and technique of the novel—something which was not seen in the nineteenth century concern with plot, character, delight in descriptions, and the attitude to life of the novelists.¹ The emphasis, bringing out the organic role of articulation in fiction, is best summed up in such phrases as in Percy Lubbock's view of the "single form" of the novel as an image of life not as an argument or statement of facts (*The Craft of Fiction*, London, reprint, 1961, p. 25), or in Mark Schorer's view of the supreme instance of form as *achieved* content ("Technique as Discovery", *Forms of Modern Fiction*, Minneapolis, 1948, pp. 15-6). Under this blanket description, however, "modern" theorization is characterized by some concrete aspects which, familiar as they are, require a second glance in the present context.

Of these precursors of recent theories, the first to be mentioned is the fashionable but fascinating concern with point of view or narrative technique. Once more we must back to Lubbock—it is difficult to bypass him in any discussion of the theory of the novel. Lubbock's well-

* Based on a paper read at the meeting of The Study Circle, Calcutta, on 17.5.70.

known clichés (deriving from James and others) centre round his initial position: "The whole intricate question of methodin the craft of fiction the question of the relation in which the narrator stands to his story" (*op. cit.*, p. 251.) This relationship or point of view may be the author's, the character's, or of the character's consciousness, producing diverse effects such as panorama, summary, scene and drama. According to Lubbock, the omniscient author convention is undesirable, and the point of view of an individual consciousness, through which the action is to be rendered as drama, is the proper narrative medium. This theoretical attitude of Lubbock is confirmed by J. W. Beach who, having first sketched his ideas in *The Method of Henry James* (1918), propounded them in *The Twentieth Century Novel* (New York, 1932.) He characterized the change in technique in modern fiction with his slogan of "Exit Author", extolling the virtue of point of view, whereby "the story shall tell itself, being conducted through the impressions of the character", (p. 16.) Obviously, Beach discards old fiction which is marred by the intrusion of the omniscient author or "Philosopher". The attitude towards the "point of view" as part of the notion of a tight economy in narration finds its culmination in the essay, "Point of View in Fiction" (*PMLA*, XX, 1955) by Norman Friedman, a major exponent of the Lubbock-Beach school. After upholding the individual point of view, Friedman asserts that omniscience is an "untutored" and lazy approach to narration (p. 1169.) Doubtless, such theorists have brought in essential concepts to fiction-criticism. Yet their "two chief characteristics the emphasis, on the individual point of view and the criticism of omniscient narration, seem to be biased and unjust."

The Second and the third tendencies of modern theorization derive from the influence of New criticism, under which critics seek to apply the principles and tools of poetry-criticism to fiction-criticism. There is in the first place the view of the structural form of novels as an autonomous artefact distinct from, and unconnected to life, which is to be seen only in terms of internal consistency—this improves on the general notions of form which I have touched upon before. Thus, Mark Schorer, in another context than mentioned before, develops Lubbock's general idea, by saying, "a novel is not life but an image of life, an author's selective interpretation concretely embodied" (Foreword to *Critiques and Essays in Modern Fiction*, ed. J. W. Aldridge, New York, 1953, p. xvi.) The climax to such theories is seen in R.W. Stallman: "Art siphons the stream of temporal sensuous experience—into pools of formed experience" Stallman evokes the interesting metaphor of an aquarium for fictional form: the characters in a novel, he says, are like fish in the

aquarium, while the characters in real life are like fish in the stream. Stallman argues that the life-likeness of the aquarium-fish is not the same as that of "stream-of-life" fish; being aquarium fish, they conform to the logic of the aquarium world (e.g. the coral, the greenery, the currents) and the glasswork "deceives us into thinking that the two species are identical" (Life, Art, and *The Secret Sharer, Forms of Modern Fiction*, p. 235.) The imitation of life in a novel is thus reduce to an illusion, produced by the skill of form.

Next, there is the theory of language as an essential vehicle of articulation. Thus, Mark Schorer in another well-known essay, holds that, since fiction is a literary art, "It must begin with the word" and with "figurative structures, with rhetoric as skeleton and style as body of meaning" ("Fiction and the 'Analogical Matrix'", *Critiques and Essays in Modern Fiction*, p. 83.) More concrete and emphatic is Rickword's view: character is "the pseudo-objective image" composed by the reader "of his response to an author's verbal arrangements", and story, from which character emerges, is "structurally a product of language, eloquence" ("A Note on Fiction", *Forms of Modern Fiction*, pp. 295, 300). This theory of language invariably results in the "close scrutiny of texts", as, for instance, in Allen Tate's emphasis on linguistic manipulation in the rendering of a scene as the true standard of fictional technique, which he illustrates with reference to a selected passage from *Madame Bovary* ("Technique of Fiction", *Forms of Modern Fiction*, pp. 44-5.) Closely allied to the theory of language is the theory of repetitive patterns of images, symbols, and words in the novel. A major instance is Joseph Frank's view of the "cross-referential or spatial" form in the novel... "practically indistinguishable from modern poetry" ("Spatial Form in the Modern Novel", *Critiques and Essays*, pp. 43-66). Similarly, Mark Schorer evolves his view of the "analogical matrix" in fiction, which he describes as the "dominant metaphorical quality—some related traits of diction", and generally, the whole habit of "value-association" ("Fiction and the 'Analogical Matrix'", *Critiques and Essays*, p. 83.)*

Side by side with these prevalent tendencies of modern theories, there have been certain other attitudes which are outside of the stream. For instance, E.M. Forster's famous but now rather overworked view of "flat" and "round" characters and his suggestive ideas on "pattern" and "rhythm". (*Aspects of the Novel*, 1927.) Nevertheless, Forster's views, to my mind, remain largely impressionistic. Edwin Muir (*The Structure of the Novel*, 1928), also, does not give any real theory as such, although his classification of categories of plot or fable in the

novel are quite useful. Then there is F.R. Leavis (*The Great Tradition, 1948*) who sees the novel in terms of moral intensity with which nobody has any quarrel, but which, as theory, does not appear to be strikingly new (his repeated references to "form" seem rather vague.) Notwithstanding such isolated views, the emphasis till the late fifties has been on the Lubbock-Beach mode and the quasi-New²Critical school—the two complementing and often combining with one another, occasionally supported by such individual fellow-travellers such as E.K. Brown with his notion of rhythmic structure (*Rhythm in the Novel, 1953.*)

This modern theorization of the novel has been a two-edged affair. On the one hand, it has done pioneering work in fiction-criticism. Thus, for instance, it has brought serious attention to the fact that the narrative medium of the novel is one of the necessary components of its form, so that it cannot be analyzed merely in terms of plot and character. Then again, it has brought serious attention to the facts that the novel is a composite whole like any other literary art and its form and content are indivisible. In doing all this, it has supplanted the inadequacies of former criticism and helped raise the status of the novel as a literary genre. On the other hand, it has been somewhat lop-sided in its attitude and has somewhat damaged novel-criticism. Firstly, it has tended to mechanically assert and overemphasize the question of form and technique. This has led to much pattern-hunting and search for a consistent point of view and so forth, ignoring the quality of experience expressed thereby. This defeats their fundamental assumption that form is *achieved* content (after all, part of the business of even formalist criticism should be to give the reader an enlarged view of the contents of a novel.) It is here Stallman's "aquarium"-theory calls for criticism, since it denies that the "aquarium"-fish and the "stream-of-life" fish are identical: what he ignores is that both are "fish", which gives them their sameness. Secondly, such theories, while justly seeing the technical and formal virtues of modern fiction, have usually found the older novels deficient, because these lack in the said virtues. As matter of fact, this is due to the fact that such theoretical attitudes have developed largely as a result of the growth of the modern experimental novel which has approached more and more the condition of poetry and has been concerned with formal experiments.

II

From the late 'fifties and particularly the 'sixties, a fresh school of novelistic theory has sprung (though anticipated before), which

continues the above-mentioned tradition by amending its drawbacks. Such theorists, while recognizing the new principles, have developed a catholic concept of form, and this they apply to the older masters, discovering their distinctive kinds of art. Moreover, they seek to improve on the limited approach to form and technique by taking into account the question of the presentation of life. It is a growing tendency, far from being completed, and I shall confine myself only to those few theorists who to my mind adequately represent it. For my present purpose, I shall concentrate on three of their general features: (1) the theory of narrative technique, (2) the theory of language in fiction, and (3) the elastic concept of novelistic form, with which is associated the attention to the quality of life in a novel.

Firstly, the theory of narrative technique. Here the new theories justify the omniscient author's "voice" held by previous theoreticians to be undesirable. The broad-minded attitude to the question is perhaps first distinctly seen in Geoffrey Tillotson's *Thackeray the Novelist* (Cambridge University Press, 1954.) Here Tillotson counters Lubbockian ideas by showing, with reference to Thackeray, that a "scene" can be panoramically determined (ch. V) and that the "author's voice" can do important narrative functions (ch. IV.) However, Tillotson's book rather implies the standpoint and for more forthright theoretical statements, we should turn our attention elsewhere. Martin Steinmann, Jr. points out the ineradicability of omniscience by saying that "every novelist is omniscient in that, having created a world out of his own imagination, he knows everything about this world—he becomes omniscient.....by what he chooses to tell", for instance, the inner lives of characters ("The Old Novel and the New", in *From Jane Austen to Joseph Conrad*, Minneapolis, 1958. p. 290.) It is, I think, the late W. J. Harvey, who first gave a full formulation of the liberal attitude towards narrative technique in his "George Eliot and the Omniscient Author Convention" (*The Art of George Eliot*, ch. 3, London, 1961.) Objecting to the "overtones of dispraise" that are usually associated with the use of the convention, Professor Harvey defends it as a necessary method. It is, he says, not merely a label, which is external to particular novels and which a novelist "may simply adopt or reject" (p. 68.) On the contrary, it "exists in only particular manifestations" through a variety of techniques which, if properly handled, show their importance and function upon analysis (p. 68.) The truth of Harvey's views is self-evident, and can always be tested if we remember some of the novelists we have read (Fielding's patent omniscience, for example, as distinguished from Conrad's functional omniscience in *Lord*

Jim—after all, Conrad *is* omniscient.) The truth is more particularly felt when Professor Harvey subsequently illustrates it, as, for example, by pointing out that omniscience establishes a necessary link between “macrocosm” and “microcosm” in ch. 17 of *Adam Bede* (pp. 69-71.)

The case for omniscience as a necessary technique in fiction is extensively elaborated by Wayne Booth in his classic work, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, (Chicago, 1961.) Ignoring the Lubbockian distinction between “telling” and “showing” the story, Booth denies any possibility of absolutely “impersonal” narration to fiction. For the “author’s voice”, according to him, must always inhere in the novel, even in the most “dramatic” novels; the presence will be seen, if not in anything else, at least in the author’s choice of what he will tell the reader (ch. I; here Booth explicitly echoes Steinmann.) The “author’s voice”, therefore, is not necessarily a fault. Having made this point—which I feel to be basically sound—, Booth brings in the question of “dramatized” narration whereby he shows that the author’s free exercise of his rights is an impossibility. For there is in every novel an “implied author”, the novelist’s “second self” whom he *creates* as he writes, whether in omniscient or indirect narration (e.g. pp., 156-58.) I think this to be very important point, for this helps us see that the idea of omniscience is some kind of a myth, the “omniscient author” himself being a projected image of the author behind the book, not necessarily sharing the values believed in by the historical author and knowing only as much as has been selected for the purpose of story-telling. One of Booth’s special theoretical achievements is his remodelling of the distinction between Omniscient and impersonal narrators as the distinction between reliable and unreliable narrators. Booth places the functions of the former under the name of reliable commentary which includes not merely the usual authorial commentary but also panoramas. There is no space here to dwell on Booth’s rich tabulation of these functions, it directly illustrating the “particular manifestations” of omniscience, referred to by Harvey. What is important is that Booth does not merely give a mechanical array of methods but shows that how these are persuasive, technical tools in the author’s hands for gaining his desired ends (this is largely what stands behind Booth’s concept of fiction as a rhetorical art.) Two of the host of functions that Booth discovers in authorial commentary may be mentioned here. For example, he indicates a very important but scarcely noticed function of summary, namely, irony, which cannot exist “unless the author and audience can somehow share knowledge which the characters do not hold” (much of the pleasure for example, of reading *Tom Jones* would have been

lost, he justly points out, if there had been no author's voice to remind that the situation for Tom is not always as hopeless as it appears, pp.175-76.) Then again, there are certain intricate judgements on characters which, Booth argues, cannot be inferred merely from their actions and speech and which require authorial telling (as an example, he cites Conrad's analysis of Dr. Monygham in *Nostromo*, p.189.) I fully agree with the above postulates which can be summed up as: (1) omniscience is ineradicable, (2) the author's "I" is itself a fiction, and when properly handled, contributes to rather than detracts from the fictional illusion, (3) it is not a blanket-term, but consists in various concrete techniques. No doubt, by thus broadening the concept of narrative technique these theoretical attitudes balance the undue Lubbockian emphasis on the character's point of view.

Next, the theory of novelistic language; firstly with reference to the work of one theorist, David Lodge (*The Language of Fiction*, London, 1966.) Lodge's central proposition that the novel is a verbal pattern—whatever a novelist does, he does so through words language—is not a new attitude: the theory and practice under the influence of New Criticism which I have discussed before (e.g. Rickword, Schorer) testifies to that. But Lodge claims novelty on two grounds. Firstly, he shows a liberal attitude by seeking to modify some of the tendencies of New Criticism in this respect, with an awareness that criticism is "human discourse" (p. 87). For instance, he counters Rickword's view that character as a verbal arrangement is liable to be criticized from irrelevant angles of moral, political, social or religious significance, by pointing out that "these angles are not necessarily as irrelevant" (p. 73). Secondly, aware that the theory of the novel as a verbal art is easy to apply to modern novelists who are deliberate experimenters with language, Lodge cancels any implication that older novelists are deficient in this matter and includes them in his theory (p. 30.)

Yet, Lodge, it seems, places an emphasis on the formalistic role of language, which somewhat contradicts his own position. This is seen in such statements as "the activity of returning the work of art to the continuum of actuality is made treacherously easy in the novel" (p. 72.) I do not agree with this, for, I think that this activity is, on the contrary, rather difficult (unless, of course, one adopts a native attitude of equating the novel with life.) Lodge's drawback is also seen in his concept of plot as verbal arrangement: "the synthesizing principle of all literary structures is language: *all plots are plots of language* (p. 74, *italics mine*.) To such questions that arise relevantly in one's mind, "can a plot exist prior to language?" and "can plot, put in a different

language, say, of another author's, give pleasure?" Lodge seems to say "no". Yet, Lodge's inadequacy remains evident; for, granted the unique language in which the plot finds form (that is, not as summary), it is surely true that the intellectual and aesthetic pleasure we derive from a plot depends largely on our memory of the logical and symmetrical arrangement of events, independent of the language in which it had been formed. Marvin Mudrick, to whom Lodge refers, gives a wiser view on the subject ("Character and Event in Fiction", *Critical Approaches to Fiction*, ed. Shiv K. Kumar and Keith McKean, 1968.) While he is aware that "words are the only visible structure of the fictional event" (p. 101), he clearly distinguishes between the role of language in "verse fiction". In the former the emphasis is strongly on words which must be precise and special to establish the individual and poignant singularity of the action (which is likely to be typical and general)—these are Mudrick's words. In prose fiction, Mudrick says, "the unit is the event", highly detailed and circumstantial, and therefore its language need not be so precise and special. Mudrick is also right when he says that the dependence of fiction on language is a slippery and equivocal issue. Thus, great fiction survives not only translation but a recognizable amount of bad and dull writing even in an original text. Other improvements on Lodge are found in the brief points made by Steinmann Jr. and W.J. Harvey. Steinmann Jr. aptly points out that, although we get at fictional structure through language, "structure has some measure of independence; for two works can have roughly the same structure but quite different styles; he suggests Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and the one by the Lambs as a typical example (op. cit., p. 293) Professor Harvey's attitude (*Character and the Novel*, 1965, p. 209) is more emancipated. According to him, the general principle of the work of art as an organised pattern of language is a truism not fully applicable to the novel, because of all art-forms, "the novel depends least upon its verbal medium" and "the novel loses least of all in translation", for the response to translation, as to "plot", is not solely dependent on language (this, along with Mudrick's view, answers Lodge's idea of the untranslatable uniqueness of a novel.) I am fully in accord with the implication of these views that the equation of fictional form with language is erratic. For, while language is no doubt the essential gateway to the understanding of fiction, it is *only one* of the structural components of a novel; it inheres in the presentation of a point of view, time, or rhythm, and is combined with other elements (for example, the quality of a character's mind, or an event.) Moreover, the language of fiction is not consistently on the high pitch of poetic language.

Finally, the most important theory—that of the “form” of the novel, to which is allied the question of the novel’s relationship with life. Recent theories discard the concept of a concentrated, self-complete form, as this, according to them, is incompatible with the nature of the novel which has to deal with so much amorphous material of life. Thus, for instance, Barbara Hardy (*The Appropriate Form*, London, 1964) objects to the Jamesian notion of an aesthetic form of a highly concentrated unity as something, which if too rigidly pursued, would end by damaging the vitality of the novel. What may be thematically and aesthetically satisfactory, she says, may be “humanly unsupported” (as an example; she cites the rejection of Maria Gostrey in *The Ambassadors* pp. 5-6.) While I fully agree with this view, her own ideas of form require a more critical scrutiny. She divides “narrative form” into three categories (1) the form of the story or the “narrative curve of tension”, (2) the form or organization of the criticism of life which she also calls “argument”, and (3) the form which expresses the “individual moment” and the individual life, which she also describes as “imitation” the “form of truth”. While these views are no doubt theoretically sound and eminently acceptable, they also seem to be somewhat inadequate. Everybody knows that a novel must give a story, a criticism of life, and an imitation of life. But the questions remain : do these represent the forms themselves (which is not ruled out by her discussion) ? or, do these *have forms* of their own—if so, what are these forms ? She is not clear on these points. However, Mrs. Hardy is very clear on another, and more important issue. She points out that in order to give unity and organization to the novel, these elements need to inhere in or combine with some kind of catholic aesthetic form capable of accommodating the “redundancies” and “vitality” of the novel, especially of older novels. This is clear in her view that the response to fiction depends on “characters and language acting in the interest of local vitality as well as in the interest of overriding theme” (p. 84). This is also clear from her subsequent criticism of novelists and novels. For instance, she shows in her discussion of George Meredith’s *Harry Richmond*, how the image and symbol-pattern in the novel represents a combination of the main thematic stream and a “casual and wayward richness” (pp. 83-104) ; again, with reference to *Middlemarch*, she proves that the demand for unity and the demand for truth” are inseparable (p. 131.) On the whole, she holds a very welcome attitude in her repeated insistence on “local vitality” of truthful representation in the novel, and in her conditioning, and being conditioned by unity, or better, “completeness” of form.

W. J. Harvey (*Character and the Novel*) makes a more elaborate theorization about this question of balance between an aesthetic form and the quality of life portrayed in a novel. Harvey develops his theory from his initial distinction between two theories which he applies to the form of the novel; the "autonomy theory" which is concerned with the inner consistency of the work (the H. C. F. of Lubbockian-cum-New Critical ideas), and the "theory of mimesis" which derives from the "root proposition", "Art Imitates Nature" (pp. 11-3.) While he holds his brief for the mimesis theory, Harvey's is no simple theory equating the novel with life. First, he introduces the notion of the "angle of mimesis". The "normal" work like *Middlemarch*, he says, has a narrow mimetic angle, being very nearly parallel to life itself—reading which one feels "life is like this"; a work of fantasy like *Alice in Wonderland* is at right-angles "to life", reading which one feels, "let us pretend life is like this"; in between these two categories lies the entire range of prose fiction, which may be described as a "mimetic arc" (p. 16.) thus, mimesis in the novel is subject to a pattern, and is not a static idea. Having made this valuable, plastic notion of mimesis, which counters any naive idea that the novel mechanically imitates life, Harvey rounds off his initial proposition by stating that experience in the novel may be seen in terms of texture, that is, the texture of our lives, and structure, which organizes texture. This structuring is done by means of what he calls, borrowing a phrase from Kant, "constitutive categories"—there being four such categories, Time, Identity, Causality, Freedom. Since "only in terms of structure the texture of life makes any sense", Harvey states that a mimetic theory of the novel is possible in terms of the structure of experience (pp. 21-4.) An eminently suitable point, to my mind, since it attempts to accommodate the representation of life to formal organization.

I do not have the scope here to give a full account of all Harvey's detailed theories with their complex philosophical overtones. (For example, his idea of the four "constitutive categories" is a sophisticated re-valuation of the structural properties of the novel, requiring close examination—which is beyond the present compass.) I think that his theory claims attention for the following wise and sane attitudes. Firstly, this theory, as he himself says, tolerates the "loose ends and muddle"—"a part of all experience" (p.184.) Therefore the theory assets the obvious but very seldom recognized fact of the "surplus margin of gratuitous life, a sheer excess of material", "energy, variety, abundance", as a characteristic of great novels (p.188), which modern criticism has largely ignored. Secondly, he gives a very relevant warning against

concentrated formal precision, echoing Barbara Hardy, by pointing out that the danger is that "unity may be bought at the cost of too much" (p 185.) Moreover, the characters must not be too conscious of formal patterns which the reader is supposed to infer, nor should the reader himself be too conscious of the patterns—these should remain submerged under the dense masses of experience in a novel (p.186) ; a wise precaution against image and symbol-hunting and a guide to discovering the proper artistic handling of patterns.) Finally, the unique feature of his theory consists in its reconciliation of a sense of the "formlessness of life" which he so much harps upon to the "discipline of art" (through the constitutive categories and the contextual determinants of character), a balance which was never achieved by criticism.

III

To sum up, all these recent theories, whether of narrative technique, or language, or form, issue forth from a liberal imagination. They clearly bring out the autonomous features of the novel, namely, the expansiveness of event, of character, of authorial vitality, in short, what Christopher Caudwell meant by the "stuff" of the novel (*Illusion and Reality*, Bombay, 1947, p.168.) At the same time, by subjecting these expansive materials to notions of formal and artistic articulation (not indulging them for their own sake), they do indeed mark the beginnings of a new theory of fiction, distinguishing it from other literary arts. There are, however, only the beginnings, and I would like to conclude by asking some questions. Firstly, these theories are largely concerned with older, especially nineteenth century fiction, which more than the twentieth-century novel, answers to the concept of novels bulging with life. Now, while it has been found possible to apply enlarged modern concepts to these older novels, will it ever be possible to form a still enlarged vision of the novel, which will be applicable to modern novels as well—equally discovering new values, skill and meanings in them, as in older fiction? (My answer is yes, e.g., a consideration of omniscience in Henry James or Joyce.) Secondly, will it ever be possible to evolve a *full and complete* theory of fiction? (Harvey himself admits that his theory, the most complete possible, is tentative.) To my mind, theoretical approaches to the novel—perhaps because of its very elastic nature—will always be left with a margin of possible alterations: They will depend firstly on the type of novel one is dealing with and then on the particular preferences of the critic himself.⁸

NOTES

1. I am aware of attempts made to show the anticipation of "modern" ideas in fictional theory in the nineteenth century, as in Richard Stang's *The Theory of the Novel in England, 1850-1870*, London, 1961, and Kenneth Graham's *English Criticism of the Novel, 1865-1900*, Oxford, 1965. However, such anticipations, for one thing highly fragmentary, did not leave any impact on contemporary fiction-criticism, which is where they differ from twentieth century concepts.
2. Of these, the views especially of Frank, and also of E. K. Brown—whom I have later referred to—are related to the question of structure, one of the issues the scope of this essay does not allow me to touch on. For this reason I do no more than mention them.
3. I have necessarily left out of the discussion such works as Frank Kermode's *The Sense of an Ending*, O U. P., 1967, or the still later book by Bernard Bragonzi, *The Situation of the Novel*, London, 1970. To my mind, Kermode, making an interesting exploration of the philosophical, anthropomorphic, and literary relationship between structure and sense in the novel, does not give any new theory as such. Bragonzi extends the new, recent theories that I have been discussing.

A MINOR RIDDLE IN SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

SUNIL KANTI SEN

In the first nineteen sonnets of the 1609 edition which form a distinct sequence Shakespeare's main concern appears to be his friend's increase. The doctrine of increase was one of the medieval commonplaces inherited by the Elizabethans. "The which thing (all men know) can never be done without Wedlock, and carnal copulation". (*Encomium Matrimonii*, Erasmus, translated by Thomas Wilson). In Elizabethan love poetry the argument that celibacy is against the law of nature has been cunningly used by importunate lovers. When Leander says to Hero,

Who builds a palace, and rams up the gate
Shall see it ruinous and desolate.
Ah simple Hero, learn thyself to cherish :
Lone women, like to empty houses, perish.

he is not entirely disinterested.

Venus uses the same argument while wooing Adonis :

Upon the earth's increase why shouldst thou feed,
Unless the earth with thy increase be fed ?

In Shakespeare's sonnets the motivation appears to be different. Whatever his relationship with his friend, clean and warm friendship or pederastic infatuation, the poet's plea that he should marry and beget children appears to express a genuine concern for a fair creature's increase. Behind this plea lies an obsessive fear of 'the bloody tyrant, Time'. In sonnet 12 he says that breed is the only defence against 'Time's scythe'. In sonnet 15 it is suggested for the first time that the poet can mitigate time's ravages by recreating his love in verse. "As he takes from you, I engraft you new". But he argues in sonnet 16 that the mightier way to make war on time is to marry and procreate as neither "Time's pencil" (which means the "painted counterfeit" in line 8) nor his "pupil pen" has the power to defeat time. In sonnet 17 he is still diffident about the death-defying power of his verse but there is a distinct advance in self-confidence. His 'pupil pen' has the potential power to enshrine in immortal verse the beauty and charm of his friend but it would be wiser to marry and beget children instead of relying

exclusively on his rhyme lest 'the age to come' should think it too heavenly to be true. In sonnet 18 he drops the earlier plea for marriage and in superbly controlled verses he defies time and promises eternal summer to his friend. In the next sonnet the tone is more aggressive and the poet defies time's 'antique pen' to taint the undying youth that his 'pupil pen' shall bestow on his love.

Here is a minor riddle. Why should he drop in sonnets 18 and 19 the elaborately argued case for marriage? There is one simple answer. Shakespeare is interested in the immortality of his fair youth who is a paragon of beauty (beauty's rose). In the earlier sonnets the poet makes use of the traditional doctrine of increase through wedlock as he is unsure about the powers of his verse. In sonnet 15 there is the first hint that poetry can in a measure immortalise beauty. Then follows a sudden discovery that the immortality that poetry can bestow is more precious than a fresh print through marriage. I find this answer much too simple to be convincing. I wish to argue that sonnet 20 is the key to this riddle. The boy-woman Hermaphroditus image of the sonnet is a much truer description of the strange infatuation Shakespeare felt for his fair youth and the poet was never seriously interested in his increase. The poet had the instinctive tact to realize that the doctrine of increase can serve different ends in different situations. In a Leander-Hero or Venus-Adonis situation it is an artful device for making love. Where friendship has no sexual overtones, the older friend urging a young and handsome boy to marry and procreate can be a polite form of paying tributes to his beauty. It would be idle to pretend that Shakespeare's relationship with his friend was one of simple friendship and in the first nineteen sonnets the poet is almost afraid to probe the nature of this relationship. Hence he falls back on polite commonplaces. Indeed in these sonnets Shakespeare appears to write under a constraint; the element of playfulness, the use of quibble and double entendre which make some of the later sonnets so rich and multi-layered in meaning are noticeably absent in these sonnets. In these elegant literary exercises the familiar arguments for marriage and breed derive their energy from the poet's real apprehension that time may soon blight 'beauty's rose'. But the pretence of simple friendship is overworked. In sonnet 15 the ground is slightly shifted and there is the first hint that poetry too can defend beauty. In sonnets 16 and 17 it is repeated with some diffidence and in the following two sonnets the theme of marriage is dropped altogether. That poetry can eternalise beauty is not a new discovery made by Shakespeare; it is a literary commonplace which replaces the traditional commonplace of the doctrine of increase. Shakespeare

soon finds both of them inhibiting. With sonnet 20 begins a frank exploration of the tensions and complexities of this strange relationship, and in the legend of Hermaphroditus he discovers a true allegory of his situation.

But since she pricked thee out of women's pleasure

Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their treasure.

With this daring use of double entendre begins a new sequence of sonnets.

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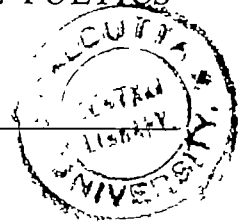
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CORPUS ARISTOTELICUM AND THE POETICS IN ANTIQUITY *

D. K. LAHIRI CHOUDHURY



The object of this paper is to present an account of the career of Aristotle's *Poetics* in Antiquity in relation to the Aristotelian *Corpus* as a whole. In a separate study to be brought out at a later date, it is proposed to review the critical influence the treatise exercised in the period under discussion. By 'Antiquity' is meant the period which, for the present purpose, begins with the 4th century B.C. and ends with the 5th century A.D.

This paper puts no claim to original research, but seeks to present in a coordinated manner the findings of various specialist works on the subject. As no single general work treats the subject under discussion adequately, this article, it is hoped, will prove to be of some use to the non-specialist students of Aristotle with a special interest in the *Poetics*. The method followed here is the same as that followed by the writers of historical surveys.

It is pertinent to begin the story into some important dates in Aristotle's life.¹ Aristotle, the son of a doctor, was born, by the most likely reckoning, in 384 B. C. in the city of Stagira in Thrace.² It is generally agreed that he *probably* entered Plato's Academy in Athens when about seventeen or eighteen and remained there till Plato's death in 348-47; that is, for nearly twenty years; (probably), because it has been questioned in recent times whether Aristotle was actually a member

* This paper was originally presented before a study circle of English scholars in Calcutta in November, 1971. The present writer feels obliged to admit that the gaps in the story here presented are considerable. An Indian scholar working on a Western subject inevitably has to 'make do' with limited and often distressingly meagre resources. This problem, naturally, is more than usually acute in subjects like the one in hand. For example, a number of major works on the subject in general and on Aristotle and the *Poetics* in particular are not available in Calcutta. Some of the more important omissions have been indicated in the notes. The scholarly apparatus provided at the end of the essay is based on materials actually available at the National Library, Calcutta. Apart from pointing out some glaring omissions, it does not pretend to bibliographical comprehensiveness.

of the Academy, or, for that matter, if there was an Academy at all. After Plato's death he, along with Xenocrates,³ went as an invited guest to Hermias, the King of Atarnus and Asses in Mysia.⁴ Hermias had risen from the humble position of a slave, had been once a student of Plato's Academy, and was a personal friend of both. In 343-42 B.C. Aristotle went to Macedon on the invitation of King Philip as the tutor of young Alexander, then thirteen or fourteen years old. In 340 or so he probably left the job when Philip appointed Alexander Regent. It is probable he now retired to Stagira.⁵ In 335 soon after Philip's death he returned to Athens and founded his famous school, the Lyceum. His followers later came to be known as the 'Peripatetics'.⁶ In 323 B.C. Athens became unsafe for people with a Macedonian background, and Aristotle left Athens once again. Thus ended the second and the last Athenian period of Aristotle's life. He left his school to his pupil Theophrastus and went away to Calchis, where he died the next year at the age of 62 or 63. A charming story is told by Gellius of how Aristotle chose his successor.⁷ When the master once fell seriously ill his pupils approached him to nominate his successor. Among his pupils were Theophrastus from Lesbos and Endemus from Rhodes. Aristotle put off making up his mind. Some time later in the presence of his pupils he said that the wine he was drinking did not suit his health and that he would prefer a foreign wine like some from Lesbos or Rhodes. He was supplied with both kinds. Tasting the Rhodian wine he said 'This is truly a sound and pleasant wine'. Next, tasting the wine from Lesbos he said 'Both are very good indeed, but the Lesbian is the sweeter.' Thus tactfully he indicated his preference which was accepted by all.

The history of the *Poetics* in Antiquity is a part of the general history of the transmission of Aristotle's works. The *Poetics* acquired separate history of its own quite late. Thus it is the general aspect of the problem that must be discussed first before getting down to the particularities of the *Poetics*. Our earliest source here is the voluminous *Geography* of Strabo who was born in the latter half of the 1st Century B.C. and lived well into the Christian era.⁸ The relevant observations of Strabo go thus :

Neleus succeeded to the possession of the library of Theophrastus, which included that of Aristotle; for Aristotle gave his library, and left his school, to Theophrastus. Aristotle was the first person with whom we are acquainted who made a collection of books, and suggested to the Kings of Egypt the formation of a library. Theophrastus left his library to Neleus,

who carried it to Scepsis, and bequeathed it to some ignorant persons who kept the books locked up, lying in disorder. When the Scepsians understood that the Attalic kings, on whom the city was dependent, were in eager search for books, with which they intended to furnish the library at Pergamus, they hid theirs in an excavations underground ; at length, but not before they had been injured by damp and worms, the descendants of Neleus sold the books of Aristotle and Theophrastus for a large sum of money to Apellicon of Teos. Apellicon was rather a lover of books than a philosopher ; when therefore he attempted to restore the parts which had been eaten and corroded by worms, he made alterations in the original text and introduced them into new copies ; he moreover supplied the defective parts unskilfully, and published the books full of errors. It was the misfortune of the ancient Peripatetics, those after Theophrastus, that being wholly unprovided with the books of Aristotle, with the exception of a few only, and those chiefly of the exoteric kind, they were unable to philosophize according to the principles of the system, and merely occupied themselves in elaborate discussions on commonplaces. Their successors however, from the time that these books were published, philosophized, and propounded the doctrine of Aristotle more successfully than their predecessors, but were under the necessity of advancing a great deal as probable only, on account of the multitude of errors contained in the copies.

Even Rome contributed to this increase of errors ; for immediately on the death of Apellicon, Sylla, who captured Athens, seized the library of Apellicon. When it was brought to Rome, Tyrannion, the grammarian, who was an admirer of Aristotle, courted the superintendent of the library and obtained the use of it. Some vendors of books, also, employed bad scribes and neglected to compare the copies with the original. This happens in the case of other books which are copied for sale both here and at Alexandria.⁹

Some interesting points about Strabo's account deserve comments. First, Strabo's opinion of Apellicon who according to him was 'rather a lover of books than a philosopher', is corroborated in the pages of Athenaeus some two centuries later. The next interesting point is about Tyrannion.¹⁰ What lends veracity to Strabo's statement is the fact that Strabo was a direct pupil of the grammarian, as Strabo himself says elsewhere in the book.¹¹ The third point, the most important of all,



is Strabo's description of some of the works of Aristotle as *exoteric*. This is so much a part of the Aristotelian tradition that the point will have to be discussed in some detail later.

Our next most important source for the history of the transmission of the Aristotelian *corpus* is Plutarch's *Life of Sulla*. (A.D. c.45-after 120). Plutarch uses Strabo as his main source but adds to it details not found in Strabo. Thus Plutarch:

Having put to sea with all his ships from Ephesus, on the Third day he came to anchor in Piræus. He was now initiated into the mysteries, and seized for himself the library of Apellicon the Teian, in which were most of the treatises of Aristotle and Theophrastus, at the time not yet well-known to the public. But it is said that after the library was carried to Rome, Tyrannion the grammarian arranged most of the works in it, and that Andronicus the Rhodian was furnished by him with copies of them, and published them, and drew up the lists now current. The older Peripatetics were evidently of themselves accomplished and learned men, but they seem to have had neither a large nor an exact acquaintance with the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus, because the estate of Neleus of Scepsis, to whom Theophrastus bequeathed his books, came into the hands of careless and illiterate people.¹²

The detail about Andronicus of Rhodes which Plutarch adds to the account of Strabo almost completes our knowledge of the early history of the transmission of Aristotle's works. Some details, however will have to be added to these accounts by Strabo and Plutarch from Diogenes Laertius and Athenaeus. But first let us sort out the information provided by Strabo and Plutarch.

Strabo and Plutarch tell us that the works of Aristotle disappeared temporarily from the public view shortly after the death of Theophrastus in 288-85 B.C. The earlier Peripatetics, Strabo and Plutarch declare, lost touch with the works of the master at this stage. They came to light again with Apellicon of Teos acquiring them; but this exposure did them more harm than good. They were brought to Rome by Sulla in 83 B.C. after the sack of Rome, where first Tyrannion the grammarian and then Andronicus of Rhodes worked on them. We also note in passing that some Aristotelian works, obviously the less important ones as Strabo considered them at any rate, are called 'exoteric'.

Before passing on to Diogenes Laertius (1st half of the 3rd century A.D.) and Athenaeus (fl.c. A.D. 200) a few words on Andronicus of Rhodes first. Besides the numerous scholia which have survived, the

three major ancient sources for Andronicus (1st century B.C.)¹³ the 11th Scholae of the Peripatetic school in Athens counting from Aristotle are Plutarch, Porphyry in his life of Plotinus, and Boethius in his *Categories*. Of these three, Boethius is not available at the National Library. Plutarch, the earliest of the three, has already been quoted. Here is Porphyry on Andronicus:

Apollodorus, the Athenian, edited in ten volumes the collected works of Epicharmus, the comedy writer; Andronicus, the Peripatetic, classified the works of Aristotle and of Theophrastus according to subject, bringing together the discussions of related topics: I have adopted a similar plan'.¹⁴

Porphyry's classification of the works of Plotinus which is given in the same work provides us with valuable clue to the method of editing and organising Aristotle's works followed by Andronicus. Boethius (b.c. 470/480 A.D.) speaks of Andronicus as 'exactum, diligentemque Aristotelis librorum et judicem et repertorem'.¹⁵

This is all the external evidence we have for the value and the nature of the recension of Andronicus, made about 50 B.C. The scholia collected by Rose as has already been pointed out, are not available in Calcutta. Grant sums up the contribution of Andronicus thus:

But (i.e., in spite of Plutarch, Porphyry, and Boethius) none of the great Greek commentators or Scholiasts betray any knowledge of the story about the library of Apellicon, or of the recension of Andronicus... Nothing, however, contradicts this hypothesis, and all internal evidence leads to the belief that 'our Aristotle', as Grote expressed it, is the Aristotle of the recension of Andronicus.¹⁶

And thus Grote:

Our editions of Aristotle may be considered as taking their date from the critical effort of Andronicus, with or without subsequent modifications by others, as the case may be.¹⁷

There seems little doubt that the oldest existing MSS dating back to the 9th century A.D. are derived from the text of Andronicus at two or three removes.¹⁸ Earlier, Grote quotes Spengel to justify the remark that 'the critical arrangement of Aristotle's writings, for collective publication, begins from the library of Apellicon at Rome, not from that of Alexandria'.¹⁹

However, if *our* Aristotle indeed represents the edition of Andronicus, it is obvious Andronicus could not have meant his edition to be the complete works of Aristotle; for, in that case he would not have left

out the Dialogues and lighter writings from which his eminent contemporary Cicero quotes so freely. The edition of Andronicus, then, is an attempt to bring together, grouped according to their subjects, the important scientific and philosophic writings of Aristotle, and not all the works of the master ²⁰

This account of Strabo and Plutarch is partly contradicted by Athenaeus in his *Deipnosophists* (completed c.A.D.192) Athenaeus in his magnificently discursive style, while describing the exploits of Athenian, the despot, confirms in passing the story of Apellicon of having bought the library of Neleus. His version of the character of Apellicon does not differ significantly from that of Strabo and Plutarch. Thus Athenaeus :

And he [Athenian] seized not merely the property of citizens, but presently he took the goods of foreigners as well, reaching out his hands even for the property of the god at Delos. At any rate, he sent to the island Apellicon of Teos, who had been made an Athenian citizen and had run a chequered and novelty-seeking career. When, for example, he professed the Peripatetic philosophy, he bought up Aristotle's library and many other books (for he was very rich) ²¹

Athenaeus, introducing one of his characters Larensis, says earlier :

...he [Larensis] owned so many ancient Greek books that he surpassed all who have been celebrated for their large libraries, including Polycrates of Samos, Peisistratus the tyrant of Athens, Euclides, likewise an Athenian, Nicocrates of Cyprus, the Kings of Pergamum, Euripides the poet, Aristotle the philosopher, Theophrastus, and Neleus, who preserved the books of the two last named. From Neleus, he [Athenaeus] says, our king Ptolemy, surnamed Philadelphus, purchased them all and transferred them with those which he had procured at Athens and at Rhodes to his beautiful capital, Alexandria. ²²

The statement 'purchased them all' in the passage just quoted deserves special attention. Thus Athenaeus flatly contradicts the story of Strabo and Plutarch that the books passed from Neleus to Apellicon, and indeed his own statement quoted earlier.

Our last important source for the topic in hand is the biography of Aristotle by Diogenes Laertius, written probably in the first half of the third century A.D. Despite discrepancies, Diogenes Laertius is our single most important ancient source for Aristotle's life, his will, and a catalogue of his books. Aristotle's will, as quoted by Diogenes, contains no reference to Aristotle's library. The rest of Strabo's story, however, is confirmed in the will of Theophrastus which Diogenes

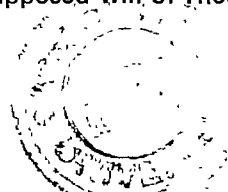
reproduces. In his will Theophrastus says clearly: 'The whole of my library I give to Neleus.' Thus Strabo's account of how the library of Aristotle and Theophrastus passed to Neleus is confirmed both by Athenaeus and the will of Theophrastus in the version of Diogenes. The question of Aristotle's will not mentioning the library however, remains.²⁸ Zeller argues that this does not throw doubts on the authenticity of the will, and thinks that Aristotle must have already made arrangements for the disposal of his library and his house in Athens, and hence had no reason to refer to it again in his will. It seems highly probable that Aristotle made arrangements for the school, his town property, and his library when he was forced to leave Athens. Thus while the will of Theophrastus contains express provision for the school as well as the library, Aristotle's will is silent on both the points. Indeed, the chief concern of Aristotle's will is the future well-being of those dependent on him—his relations as well as slaves—and compared to the will of Theophrastus is curiously silent on property matters. This seems to confirm Zeller's theory.

Several problems emerge from these quoted extracts:

- (1) Did Aristotle's works really become lost to the public with the death of Theophrastus and come to light only with Andronicus of Rhodes?
- (2) Did the books of the master pass from Neleus to Ptolemy, as Athenaeus says at one place, or to Apellicon and then to Sulla, as Strabo and Plutarch say and as Athenaeus himself says elsewhere in the book?
- (3) What do we think of the reliability, or at least the historic authenticity of the catalogue of Aristotle's works furnished by Diogenes Laërtius at the end of his biography of Aristotle, and other such ancient catalogues of Aristotle's works?
- (4) What does Strabo mean by the term 'exoteric' as applied to certain works of Aristotle?

A discussion of these four questions will lead to a consideration of Aristotle's extant *corpus* in relation to his works as a whole, the date of the works, the chronological position of the *Poetics* in the *corpus*, classifications of Aristotle's works with special reference to the position of the *Poetics*, and the textual tradition or traditions of Aristotle's texts. The discussion will not necessarily be in the same order as those problems have been passed here.

First the question: are Strabo and Plutarch correct in saying that most of the works of the master save some 'exoteric' ones were lost to the earlier Peripatetics following the death of Theophrastus? The story of Neleus getting the library of Theophrastus is confirmed by so many independent ancient sources including the supposed will of Theophrastus



that there is no need to doubt it. It might also be conceivably true that in order to save the books from the predatory Kings of Pergamum on the prowl for books to make an impressive library, no doubt as a status symbol calculated to do the upstart Ptolemies one in the eye, these manuscripts were in fact relegated to a cellar and were forgotten for quite some time. The question, however, remains: were not these works circulating in *other* copies? Are Strabo, and, following Strabo, Plutarch right in saying that the Peripatetics after Theophrastus were 'wholly unprovided with the books of Aristotle, with the exception of a few only, and these chiefly of the exoteric kind'? This is really the point at issue.²⁵ Grote argues that Strabo is only pointing out the poverty of the Peripatetic school-library at Athens and asserts that many of the works beside the 'exoteric' had been published before Apellicon.²⁶ In general he finds Strabo's story 'fully worthy of trust'.²⁷ He goes on to declare: 'the recovery of these long-lost original manuscripts of Aristotle and Theophrastus excited great sensation in the philosophical world of Athens and Rome.'²⁸ Grant is also more or less of the same opinion. He declares: 'there does not seem to have been any multiplication of copies, or what we should call 'publication'!²⁹ To him Andronicus definitely means the rediscovery of *our* Aristotle, to use Grote's phrase which Grant quotes, as different from the Alexandrian Aristotle. But more of this anon. Meanwhile it should be pointed out that Grant in his earlier more detailed and scholarly work, his two volume edition of the *Ethics* with introductory essays, gives his reasons for doubting Strabo's account³⁰ which Zeller repeats in his work with some additions of his own. Grant's conclusion in this work is very similar to Zeller's: 'It was rather the apathy of the Peripatetics which caused the great works of Aristotle to be forgotten, than that the loss of those works causes the paralysis of the school.'³¹

Zeller is prepared to grant all the facts to Strabo and Plutarch including, of course, the epoch-making importance of the edition of Andronicus of Rhodes. He only questions Strabo's assertion that the earlier Peripatetics before Apellicon did not have access to the scientific treatises of Aristotle. First, Zeller points out, there is no awareness among the ancients concerned with such things of such an important event as the rediscovery of at least the main body of the Aristotelian *corpus*. Cicero who was in Rome at that time and had active intercourse with Tyrannion who, we know from Cicero himself, was teaching Cicero's sons in 57 B.C., does not say a word about it: nor does anyone else who directly used the very works of Andronicus. Later Alexandrian Editors did not in anyway feel bound by the text of Andronicus.³² On

the other hand, Zeller adduces direct evidence to demonstrate that not only the exoteric treatises like the dialogues but also the strictly scientific ones were known between the death of Theophrastus and the sack of Athens by Sulla. Particularly important in this connection is the case of one of Aristotle's direct pupils, Eudemus who is supposed to have imitated the master, sometimes copying his very words, in his works.⁸³ By a strange stroke of luck a letter has survived in which Eudemus, while away from Athens and working on the *Physics*, writes to Theophrastus for the actual text of a certain passage in Aristotle's *Physics*, as his own copy is defective.⁸⁴ This clearly shows that the students of the school took away copies of the important texts with them. There is enough evidence to show that the famous library of Alexandria, a collection begun by Ptolemy Philadelphus, contained a large number of Aristotle's works. In fact, Ptolemy paid such high prices for them that it was a positive encouragement to forgeries, some of which have survived to our days, the pseudo-Aristotelian *Letters to Alexander* for example. The catalogue of Diogenes Laertius is an important piece of evidence here; for, this catalogue is probably a copy of the relevant parts of the catalogue of the Alexandrian library. Besides these pieces of circumstantial evidence, Zeller points out, there is direct evidence to indicate that many of the non-exoteric works of Aristotle were known and used during the period under discussion.⁸⁵ The Stoics in the 3rd century B.C. followed closely the lead of Aristotle in logic and physics, both strictly, non-exoteric works. Besides the evidence of the catalogue of Diogenes Laertius, there is additional evidence to show that, among others, *Analytics*, *Categories*, *Physics*, *Natural History*, *De Anima*, *Metaphysics*, *Ethics*, *Politics*, *Economics*, and last but, as they say in Bengali, not the least for our purpose, the *Poetics* were known and used. Zeller concludes his argument thus: 'The belief of Strabo and Plutarch that the scientific writings of Aristotle were after the death of Theophrastus all but wholly withdrawn from access is therefore wholly negated by the facts. A few of the writings may possibly have suffered the fate which they ascribe to the whole...' This opinion of Zeller, however, has been partially challenged by later scholars on points of fact. It has been argued, for example, that the *Politics* and the *Analytics* were in fact not known during this period.⁸⁶ Ross in his note on Aristotle in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* seems to accept without reservation the accounts of Plutarch and Strabo.

The position, after Zeller, then briefly is this: quite a few of Aristotle's non-exoteric works were known even before Andronicus, but the edition of Andronicus at last gave them a new life. It was the

revival of Platonism after Theophrastus rather than the non-availability of the essential texts of Aristotle which was responsible for the decline of the Peripatetic school after the death of Theophrastus.

The next question on our list is: did the library of Aristotle and Theophrastus pass from Neleus to Ptolemy or from the heirs of Neleus to Apellicon? We have already pointed out that the two statements of Athenaeus on this point are contradictory. Apart from anything else, all the books of Aristotle could not have passed to Ptolemy from Neleus, as is evidenced by the catalogue of Aristotle's books in the Alexandrian library, Athenaeus therefore, need not be taken on this point very seriously.

The next question is concerned with the reliability and the historic authenticity of the catalogue of Diogenes Laertius and other such ancient catalogues. With this is linked the question of the textual tradition of Aristotle's works.³⁷

We have two ancient catalogues of Aristotle's works. The first has come down in two recensions, one by Diogenes Laertius, the other called the 'Anonymous Menagi'. The author of this second recension, Rose conjectures, was probably one Hesychius of Miletus who lived about 500 A.D.³⁸ Ross at first treats this as a separate catalogue, though later he asserts that both these lists are probably based on a catalogue compiled by Hermippus.³⁹ Of these two, the catalogue of Diogenes Laertius is available at the National Library, the catalogue of the 'Anonymous' is not.⁴⁰ The second catalogue has survived in two Arabic translations of a Greek original. The catalogue of Diogenes has 146 titles. The version of the 'Anonymous' leaves a few of the titles out of this catalogue and adds seven or eight new ones. This second version has an appendix of 47 titles, most of them repetitions and variants of those already mentioned. The total number of books of which these titles are made up is roughly the same in both the recensions—about 400.

The most significant thing about this catalogue of Diogenes—the 'Anonymous' is not being mentioned here as the present writer did not have an opportunity to examine it personally—is that while it mentions many works of Aristotle of which we know nothing, it fails to mention many others which we would consider central.⁴¹ Just in passing, the *Poetics* is there all right in this catalogue.

Now Aristotelicum as has already been mentioned earlier, if indeed our *Corpus* is descended from Andronicus, since the catalogue in question differs so considerably from a catalogue of the *Corpus* as we know it—we only have about 40 of Aristotle's works—it is highly probable

that this catalogue represents a tradition earlier than that which has descended from Andronicus: which in effect means it represents the Alexandrian tradition. Diogenes obviously did not compile the list himself but had copied it from some other catalogue. The similarity between this list and that of the 'Anonymous' suggests such a common source. Besides, Diogenes himself quotes from works of Aristotle not in his list.⁴² For example, he quotes from the 7th book of the *Ethics* although the catalogue gives only five books to the same work.⁴³ Similarly, he refers to the *Magicus* though there is no mention of the work in the catalogue.⁴⁴ This would seem to indicate that the list of Diogenes has been copied out by him from some other catalogue and is not of his own compilation. A lot of scholarly speculation has been expended on the probable authorship of the original catalogue. A strong candidate for the distinction is one Hermippus who wrote about 200 B.C. Hermippus⁴⁵ is one of the sources of Diogenes for the life of Aristotle.⁴⁶ Hermippus is also quoted as one of the authorities on the life of Aristotle by Athenaeus.⁴⁷ Grant holds with Grote that the catalogue contains the titles of books under the name of Aristotle in the Alexandrian library in the 3rd century B.C.; that it was originally made by either Callimachus, the chief librarian at Alexandria, or by his pupil Hermippus, between the years 240-210 B.C.; that it found its way into some biography of Aristotle, and was thence mechanically copied by Diogenes, in ignorance or disregard of the edition of Andronicus.⁴⁸ P. Moraux, a modern scholar, has attributed this list to a later Peripatetic, one Ariston of Chios.⁴⁹

The original Greek version of the second catalogue is believed to be by one 'Ptolemy' who lived in the 2nd century A.D. usually described as 'Ptolemy the Philosopher', to distinguish him from other Ptolemies in history. One Ibn el Kifti (d. 1248) and one Ibn Abi Oseibia (d. 1269) translated the work of this Ptolemy, which comprised of a biography of the master and a list of his books, into Arabic.⁵⁰ While the Greek original has perished, these two incomplete Arabic translations have survived. The original author of this list seems to have made a list of about a thousand books, not titles, by Aristotle, though the incomplete Arabic versions themselves give only about one hundred titles, comprised of about 550 books.⁵¹ Here we are treading on a ground different from the one covered by Diogenes and the 'Anonymous'. If the date ascribed to the catalogue is correct, i.e. the 2nd century A.D. there is a gap of 400 years between Catalogue 1 and Catalogue 2, the important event of the edition of Andronicus forming a sort of watershed somewhere in the middle of the period. That the compiler of

Catalogue 2, whoever he was, came *after* Andronicus and was aware of his work is evident from the references not only to Andronicus but also to Apellicon. Significantly, almost the whole of the extant *Corpus*, *our* Aristotle as Grant would put it, is represented by this catalogue with the exception of a few important works such as the *Ethics*.⁵² It is reasonable to ascribe these omissions to the incomplete nature of the list as it has come down to us *via* the Arabs. These two lists therefore may be said to represent the two traditions of Aristotle—one, the older pre-Andronican, Alexandrian tradition; the other, the later post-Andronican tradition, the tradition we have mainly inherited. While speaking of the Andronican tradition, a warning should be given against a too literal interpretation of the term 'Andronican'. We should be careful to avoid reaching such a fallacious conclusion as, after Andronicus, therefore because of Andronicus'. This is Grote's conclusion: '*our* Aristotle is traceable to the collection at Athens...they [these scientific treatises] never became fully published until the days of Apellicon.'⁵³ Zeller's argument against this too rigid a position has already been referred to. A safer conclusion, therefore, would be that the editorial work of Andronicus gave the Aristotelian *Corpus* a new life. It was no doubt helped by the bringing over of the library of Aristotle and Theophrastus to Rome. But this is not to say that they were not known or used at all in the intervening period between the death of Theophrastus and Apellicon's purchase of the library of Neleus; they very probably were. Even Grote's assertion that these works did not become fully published until the days of Apellicon is, therefore, correct only in a technical sense—that these writings had not been arranged for publication by the authors. If Zeller is right, these writings had a wider circulation and a greater influence than what Grote's observations would seem to suggest.

It is certainly curious that of the two traditions of Aristotle only one should survive while the other, the Alexandrian tradition, should perish. Grant's conjecture on this point is interesting.⁵⁴ Grant argues that numerous copies of the entire works of Aristotle, as classified and edited by Andronicus, must have been made both for public and for private collections. The wealth of Rome made it easier to have such a large number of copies made. We know from Plutarch, for example, that such copies were supplied by Rome to even Alexandria. In this form of codices of *opera omnia* or at least single volumes containing all the works of Aristotle on a subject, as classified by Andronicus, the works had a better chance of survival than manuscripts of isolated and unrelated single works like the dialogues or notes containing scientific observa-

tions for future use. Again, these lighter works did not, deservedly, attract sufficient attention from the early commentators and scholars, and thus, suffering scholarly neglect, disappeared almost whole except in isolated fragments embedded in other people's writings.

Now about the content of these two traditions of Aristotle. While there are works common to both, the *Poetics* for example, the divergences between the two are considerable enough to justify our calling them two traditions. What then is the nature of the difference between the two traditions as represented by the two catalogues mentioned above? This question leads directly to the problem of the classification of Aristotle's works.

For one thing, the list of Diogenes opens with a whole group of a class of writing of which we know nothing. These are the nineteen 'dialogues' with a distinct Platonic bias in the titles. One of them in fact is entitled *Symposium*.⁵⁵ It was through these writings that Cicero chiefly knew his Aristotle. Here then is a case for a classification of the *Corpus* not only as we know it, but as it is represented by the two catalogues mentioned above.⁵⁶ Most Aristotelian scholars have evolved separate systems of classification of their own. The classification of Zeller is being given here as an example of this kind of scholarly classification.

(1) Non-philosophical writings of a personal nature and literary efforts such as letters, poems, and occasional pieces. A very small number of such writings has survived.

(2) Dialogues dealing with philosophical and scientific matters, arranged for publication and according to popular taste most probably by the author himself. Some important works of this kind have survived in large and numerous fragments, such as the *Eudemus*, and *On Philosophy*. These two works at least show the almost total influence of Plato. It has been argued therefore that dialogues such as these were written during Aristotle's first Athenian period when he was a young member of Plato's Academy.

(3) The third group of Aristotle's works consists of strictly academic writings. These alone, apart from the *Athenian Constitution* discovered in 1890, seem to have survived. They have been classified by Zeller under the following subject-headings :

- (a) Works on logic such as the group known at least since the 6th century as the *Organon*.
- (b) Metaphysics.
- (c) Natural philosophy. i.e., study of Nature, organic and inorganic.

(d) Social sciences. The *Ethics*, *Politics*, and even the *Rhetoric* fall in this sub-group.

(e) Theory and history of Art. The only surviving example of this class of writing is the *Poetics*.

(4) There is a fourth group of writings consisting of notes of observation to be used in future writings.⁶⁷

It should be noted that barring the *Rhetoric*, the placing of which in a list of Aristotle's works on the arts is uncertain, of all Aristotle's writings on literary and artistic subjects, only the *Poetics* has survived. The catalogue of Diogenes mentions the following such works :

- (i) *On Poets*, three books.
- (ii) *On Rhetoric*, or *Grylus*, one book.
- (iii) *On the Beautiful*, one book.
- (iv) *A Collection of Arts* (i.e., *Handbooks*), two books.
- (v) Two books of the *Art of Rhetoric*
- (vi) *Art, a Handbook*, one book.
- (vii) Another collection of *Handbooks*, two books.
- (viii) *Compendium of the 'Art' of Theodectes*, one book.
- (ix) *A Treatise on the Art of Poetry*, two books, (*our Poetics*).
- (x) *Rhetorical Enthymemes*, one book.
- (xi) *On Music*, one book.
- (xii) Six books of *Homeric Problems*.
- (xiii) *Poetics*, one book.
- (xiv) *Dramatic Victories of the Dionysia*, one book.
- (xv) *Of Tragedies*, one book.
- (xvi) *Dramatic Records*, one book.

Even allowing for certain repetitions in a list which is probably a catalogue not of the *Corpus* but of the MSS actually at the Alexandrian library entered under the name of Aristotle, this long list of sixteen works on art, literary criticism, and allied subjects indicates that the master must have given serious thought to this subject. The *Poetics* therefore, should not be taken as the casual observations of a keen mind, the chief preoccupations of which, however, were logic, natural philosophy, and social philosophy. As it so happens, one whole class of Aristotle's writings has reached us only in a fragmentary version of a single work. Before finally putting a label of classification on the *Poetics* as the unique example of a particular class of writing by Aristotle, we must refer to Aristotle's own classification of his work.

Aristotle divided all philosophy into two classes, theoretic and practical.⁶⁸ Thus Physics, Mathematics, and Metaphysics are theoretic, and Ethics, Economics, and Politics are practical philosophies. The enquiries

belonging to the first group are directed to cognition, those belonging to the second group to action. Diogenes gives the following classification immediately after the catalogue :

Such is the number of works written by him. And in them he puts forward the following views. There are two divisions of philosophy, the practical and the theoretical. The practical part includes ethics and politics...The theoretical part includes physics and logic...⁶⁹

In Aristotle himself we find sufficient indications to support this classification.⁷⁰ Aristotle himself often makes a distinction between theoretical and practical reason. In the *De Anima*, for example, he asks what makes the living creature move in space, i.e., act. No one part of the soul is responsible for it. Not the generative and nutritive faculties, nor the sensitive faculty.

Nor is the reasoning faculty, which is called mind, the motive principle, for the speculative mind thinks of nothing practical, and does not comment on what is to be avoided or pursued...Even when the mind speculates on anything of the kind, it does not issue orders to avoid or to pursue...Speaking generally, we see that the man possessing knowledge of the healing art is not always healing, so that there is some other factor which causes action in accordance with knowledge and not knowledge itself.⁷¹

Again, later in the same book of the work :

There are clearly, then, two agents which produce movement, appetite and mind...These together, then, mind and appetite, are responsible for movement in space.⁷²

Here then is clear juxtaposition between the purely cognitive part of the soul, mind, and the appetitive part, desire or inclination. One by itself leads only to cognition, the special province of the speculative mind, the other to action. In the *Nichomachean Ethics* Aristotle makes a similar but slightly more elaborately worked out assertion :

Now there are three elements in the soul which control action and the attainment of truth : namely, Sensation, Intellect, and Desire. Of these Sensation never originates action... Pursuit and avoidance in the sphere of Desire correspond to affirmation and denial in the sphere of the Intellect.⁷³

The word Intellect here is a translation of the Greek word *nous* which has in the context the usual philosophic sense of the intellect, or rational parts of the soul, as a whole whose function is *dianoia*, thought in general.

Another clear statement to the same effect can be found in the *Politics* :
 ...the rational part (of the soul) is subdivided into two,...
 for reason is of two kinds, practical and theoretic,...⁶⁴

Aristotle's celebrated distinction between intellectual and moral virtues is based on this two-fold division of the faculties of the mind.

If the faculties of the mind are two, it follows that the enquiries of the mind must also be of two kinds, one directed to Cognition, the other to Action. This distinction between *gnosis*, Cognition, and *praxis*, Action, is therefore ubiquitous in the *Ethics*. The *Ethics* begins thus :

Every art and every investigation...seems to aim at some good...
 (it is true that a certain variety is to be observed among the ends at which the arts and sciences aim : in some cases the activity of practising the art is itself the end, whereas in others the end is some product over and above the mere exercise of the art ;⁶⁵

A few lines later : 'the end of this science [Politics] is not Knowledge but Action.'⁶⁶ Later, again, in the same work :

...our present study, unlike the other branches of philosophy, has a practical aim (for we are not investigating the nature of virtue for the sake of knowing what it is, but in order that we may become good...)⁶⁷

Quite early in the Peripatetic school a division of the Sciences into the *Theoretic* and the *Practical* became established. Thus, Book II (a) of the *Metaphysics*, a book which is supposed to be a later essay by one of Aristotle's pupils,⁶⁸ declares :

The object of theoretic knowledge is truth, while that of practical knowledge is action ;⁶⁹

In the *Eudemian Ethics*, a work which may not be of direct Aristotelian authorship,⁷⁰ we read :

About everything and every natural species there are many views .. ; of these some relate only to our knowledge of the thing, others deal with modes of acquiring it and acting in relation to it.⁷¹

This then is the evidence of the mode of thinking of the Aristotelian school on this point. Turning to the works of undoubted Aristotelian authorship, we soon find a third category, 'poetic action', being added to the main two-fold division, Cognition and Action. In Book VI of the *Metaphysics*, for example, Aristotle distinguishes between *poesis* or 'creative action', and *praxis* or ordinary action, whence the subdivision 'poetic or creative or productive science' :

And since physical science also happens to deal with a genus of Being, obviously it is neither a practical nor a produc-

tive science. ... Thus if every intellectual activity is either practical or productive or speculative, physics will be a speculative science ;⁷³

A few lines later we come up against the same idea :

...no science, whether practical, productive, or speculative, concerns itself with it ["being"].⁷⁴

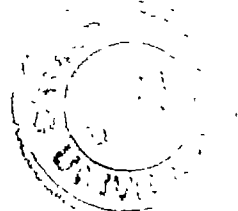
Here, then, we find the concept of a three-fold division of the activities of the mind firmly established. The same idea can be found in other works as well. In the *Topica*, for instance, we find : 'it [knowledge] is said to be theoretical, practical, and creative.'⁷⁴ and later, '...some sciences are theoretical, others practical and others creative.'⁷⁵ On the distinction between 'creative or productive action' and ordinary 'action', the *Ethics* is also illuminating. Here Aristotle says that one of the five qualities through which the mind attains Truth is art.⁷⁶ Of art itself he says : 'The class of things that admit variation includes both things made and actions done. But making is different from doing ...'⁷⁷ Again, in the *Metaphysics* we have :

In the productive sciences ... the substance ... is the object ;
but in the speculative sciences the formula or the act of thinking
is the object.⁷⁸

In an earlier book of the *Metaphysics* we meet with the statement : 'all arts, i.e., the productive sciences, are potencies', etc.⁷⁹ The main distinction between these two kinds of action is this : *praxis* has its end in the activity of the actor, *poesis* has its end outside the action itself in the work the action brings into being.⁸⁰ We need not concern ourselves here with the three-fold sub-division of 'theoretic knowledge' which Aristotle makes.⁸¹ Taking note of this three-fold division of the sciences into theoretic, practical, and productive or poetic, we see that the *Poetics* is the only extant example of Aristotle's writings in the last named group. The *Rhetoric*, incidentally, has been excluded by Aristotle himself from the class 'poetic science' and subjoined to Dialectics and Politics. In the *Rhetoric* itself he says : '...Rhetoric is...an offshoot of Dialectic and the science of Ethics, which may be reasonably called Politics.'⁸² In the *Ethics* he makes a similar observation :

We observe that even the most highly esteemed of the
faculties, such as strategy, domestic economy, oratory, are sub-
ordinate to the political science.⁸³

Thus, whichever way we look at it, whether we follow the classification made by Aristotle himself, or that made by the modern scholars like Zeller, the *Poetics* occupies a unique place among the extant Aristotelian writings, standing as it does in a class by itself.



Next is the question of date, and the position of the *Poetics* in the chronology of the extant *Corpus*. The chief 19th century authority on this question is Zeller.⁸⁴ Among modern scholars, Jaeger has taken a stand different from Zeller's. We shall come to it in due course.

It was generally agreed till Jaeger came out with his thesis in 1923 that all the extant writings of Aristotle including the *Athenian Constitution*, discovered in the sands of Egypt in 1890, belong to his second Athenian period, i.e., to the years 335/4 B.C. to 323 B.C., roughly a decade. Our evidence with regard to the dates and chronology of Aristotle's works is of two kinds. First, we have references to historical events and dates in the texts themselves. Secondly, there is a whole system of cross references in Aristotle's works binding them together. Sometimes these cross references are confusing when, for example, two works cite each other; but, normally, they are a valuable guide to the chronology of the works.

References to historical dates in Aristotle's works are numerous.⁸⁵ In the firstbook of the *Meteorologica*, for example, Aristotle says :

Again in the archonship of Nicomachus a comet appeared in the equinotical region for a few days (this one had not risen in the west)...⁸⁶

The temporal reference here is precise. The archonship of Nicomachus is placed in B.C.341; the work, therefore, could not have been written earlier than that date. In book V of the *Politics* Aristotle refers to the murder of Philip which took place in B.C.336.⁸⁷ Book II of the *Rhetoric* refers to the 'common peace' concluded between Alexander the Great and the Greeks in 336 after the death of Philip.⁸⁸ Brandis has shown that the many Attic orators quoted in the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* belong to a time after Aristotle's first departure from Athens, and the same is true of the works of Theodectes which these two works quote.⁸⁹ In the *Metaphysics* XII Aristotle refers to Eudoxus, a famous astronomer and mathematician, and a pupil of Plato, who died in c.347 B.C.⁹⁰ as though he was already dead.⁹¹ Books VII and X of the *Ethics*, too, refer in the same manner to Eudoxus and to Speusippus who succeeded Plato in the Academy and died in c.339/338 B.C.⁹² The next instance is very interesting indeed. Aristotle in the *History of Animals* gives some exact descriptions of the physical characteristics and habits of elephants. In book II he writes :

The elephant has four teeth on either side, by which it munches its food, grinding it like so much barley-meal, and, quite apart from these, it has its great teeth, or tusks, two in number. In the male these tusks are comparatively large and curved upwards ;

in the female, they are comparatively small at point in the opposite direction ; that is, they look downwards towards the ground. The elephant is furnished with teeth at birth, but tusks are not then visible⁹³.

No less exact is his account of the food habits of the elephant in book VIII :

The elephant at the most can eat nine Macedonian medimni of fodder at one meal ; but so large an amount is unwholesome. As a general rule it can take six or seven medimni of fodder, five medimni of wheat, and five *mareis* of wine—six cotylae going to the *maris*. An elephant has been known to drink right off fourteen Macedonian *metretae* of water, and another eight *metretae* later in the day⁹⁴.

One can see immediately that these are accounts based on direct personal observation. Rose has shown⁹⁵ that these passages could have been written only after the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C. when the Macedonians saw elephants for the first time, and very probably even later, after the Indian expedition (B.C.327-25) had been well under way.

No more instances need be given of this kind of date references in the texts of Aristotle. When a work with some such internal evidence which fixes its earliest date limit mentions a projected work, the date limit for this later work can be deduced from the former. Thus such temporal references are important not only for the dating of the works themselves in which they occur, but also for the dating of the works which are mentioned in them.

Another interesting kind of evidence provided by Aristotle's texts is the number of casual references to things and events which would be of interest only to an Athenian public. It is reasonable to assume that the works bearing this kind of reference were written while Aristotle was in Athens. That they were written during Aristotle's second Athenian period is established by the temporal references. For example, a work which was written after B.C.345 and with an Athenian public in view, it is reasonable to suppose, was composed during his second Athenian period. Sometimes the evidence is more direct. In the *Categories*, for instance, Aristotle twice gives the expression 'in the Lyceum' as an example of an expression indicating place⁹⁶. In the *Physica*, again, we come across the following statement : '...the sophists assume that Corsicus' being in the Lyceum is a different thing from Corsicus' being in the market place⁹⁷. Again, the *Rhetoric* mentions the Lyceum quite casually⁹⁸. But let us go back to those passages which seem to have been written with an Athenian public in view. In the

Analytica Priora Aristotle presents the following dialectical model :

For example let A be evil, B making war against neighbours,
C Athenians against Thebans, D Thebans against Phocians⁹⁹.

In book III of the *Physica* there is a reference to 'the road from Thebes to Athens . from Athens to Thebes.'¹⁰⁰ In book V of the *Metaphysics* there is a reference to sailing to Aegina as an example of a health-giving journey.¹⁰¹ The Athenian festivals of Dionysia and Thragelia are mentioned in the same book of the *Metaphysics* to illustrate the meanings of the prepositions 'from' and 'out of'.¹⁰² Again in the same book of the work the journey to Aegina is mentioned once again to illustrate a completely different point.¹⁰³ Now, we know that the *Metaphysics*, as we have it, is a loose collection of books written at different times. This bunching together in this one book of references to Athens and things of Athenian interest suggests that at least this book was written while Aristotle was in Athens. The point of the references to the actor Theodorus in the *Rhetoric*¹⁰⁴ and the *Politics*¹⁰⁵ would be clear only to an Athenian familiar with the acting and voice techniques of this popular Athenian actor. Besides these instances, there are numerous references to Athens, Athenians, and Athenian customs in Aristotle's works.

Next, the question of the chronological order of the extant texts. Given below is the chronology of the major works of Aristotle, suggested by Zeller on grounds of internal cross references, temporal references in the texts themselves, and Aristotle's own casual pronouncements on the subject.¹⁰⁶ Zeller ascribes the entire extant *Corpus* to Aristotle's second Athenian period.

Logic : *The Categories* ;

The Topica, including the book on Fallacies ;

The Analytics.

The Metaphysics V.

Natural Philosophy :

Physica, *De Caelo*, *De Generatione et Corruptione*, *Meteorologica* ; *Natural History* and *De Anima* (not certain which is earlier) ; *The Parts of Animals*, *The Movement of Animals*, *The Genesis of Animals*.

Social Philosophy :

The Ethics, *The Politics* (a loose collection of essays not arranged and collected together by the he author himself).

art : *The Poetics*.

Social Philosophy :

The Rhetoric.

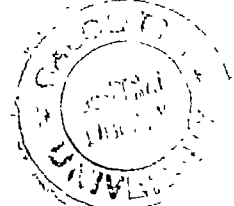
The Metaphysics is a loose collection of books left unarranged by the master. Some serious objections to this dating and chronology of Zeller's came from Jaeger in 1923.¹⁰⁷ whom Ross accepts.¹⁰⁸ Of late, however, a reaction has set in against Jaeger, and his working assumption that the philosophical thoughts of Aristotle developed in a straight line from a Platonic idealism to Empiricism has been more or less rejected.¹⁰⁹

Jaeger places the Dialogues in the 1st Athenian period of Aristotle. To the period of Aristotle's stay in Assos and Macedon he ascribes *The Organon*, *The Physics*, *The De Caelo*, the *Generatione et Corruptione*, the *De Anima* bk III, the *Eubemian Ethics* (accepting it as a genuine work), the oldest parts of the *Metaphysics* and the *politics*, and the earliest parts of the *Historia Animalum*. In Aristotle's second Athenian period he puts the *Meteorologica*, the *Constitutions*, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *poetics*, and the *Rhetoric*.

We are, however, concerned chiefly with the placing of the *poetics* and no body has questioned its placing in the second Athenian period. Let us, then, round off the present discussion on the dates and chronology of Aristotle's works with some brief observations on the dates of the *poetics* itself.¹¹⁰

The facts of the case here are clear enough. That the *poetics* was written in the second Athenian period is shown by the temporal reference in the text itself. The work of Brandis on this point has already been referred to. Additional corroborative evidence is supplied by the numerous temporal references in the *Rhetoric* and the many references to the *poetics* in the *Rhetoric* as a past work. In book I of the *Rhetoric* Aristotle says: 'The ridiculous has been discussed separately in the *poetics*.'¹¹¹ Again, in book III he says that he will discuss here only prose style, 'As for the other kind of style (i. e., poetic style), it has already been treated in the *poetic*.'¹¹² The reference here is clearly to ch. XXII of the *Poetics*. Again, a few lines later he says: 'of nouns and verbs it is the proper ones that make style perspicuous; all the others which have been spoken of in the *poetics* elevate and make it ornate; for departure from the ordinary makes it appear more dignified.'¹¹³ Obviously ch. XXI of the *poetics* is being referred to here where ornamental and metaphorical words have been discussed. A few lines further on Aristotle says:

Nouns and verbs being the components of speech, and nouns being of the two different kinds which have been considered in the *poetics*, of these we should use strange, compound, or coined words only rarely and in few places.¹¹⁴



The reference here is obviously to the following sentence in particular in the *poetics* XXI :

Every word is either current, or strange, or metaphorical, or ornamental, or new lycoined, or lengthened, or contracted, or altered.¹¹⁵

Again a few lines later in the *Rhetoric*:

It has already been stated, as we have said, in the *poetics*, what each of these things (i.e., different kinds of words) is, how many kinds of metaphor there are, and that it is most important both in poetry and in prose.¹¹⁶

The reference here, obviously, is to the *poetics*, ch. XXI and XXII, ix.

The *Poetics* is referred to once again towards the end of the *Rhetoric* :

We have stated in the *Poetics* how many kinds of jests there are, some of them becoming a gentleman, other not.¹¹⁷

In all these extracts, quoted from the *Rhetoric*, the *Poetics*, it should be noted, is mentioned as a work already in existence, and in most cases we can even trace the actual passages to which the *Rhetoric* refers. In book VIII of the *Politics* on the other hand we come across a reference to the *Poetics* as a projected work only :

—the term purgation we use for the present without explanation, but we will return to discuss the meaning that we give to it more explicitly in our treatise on poetry (i.e., the *Poetics*)—¹¹⁸

There is no unanimity among the modern scholars over the date of book VIII of the *Politics*.¹¹⁹ Some would put it among the earlier books of the *politics* which are supposed to belong to the period of Aristotle's stay in Assos and Macedon ; others in the later group. However, this much is clear : the *poetics* must have been written *after* the *politics* VIII and *before* the *Rhetoric*. If indeed the *politics* belong to the period of Aristotle's stay in Assos and Macedon, the *Poetics* also must have been planned out as early as that even if we take it that it was actually written out much later.

Another point of major interest emerges from these references to the *Poetics* in the *Rhetorics*. In the very first reference to the *Poetics* in the *Rhetoric*, quoted above, we read that a discussion of the ludicrous has been made in the *Poetics*. In the work as we have it, there is merely a promise of such a discussion at the beginning of ch. VI following the brief historical sketch of the origin of the Comedy in ch. V. The last reference to the *Poetics* in the *Rhetoric*, quoted above, mentions a classification of jests in the *Poetics*. There is, of course, no such classification in the work as it now exists. All this leads us to believe that the *Poetics*, as we know it, is only a fragment of the original work, the part containing the discussion on Comedy being missing. There is

additional evidence to support this view.¹²⁰ Both the ancient catalogues of Aristotle's works, the one by the 'Anonymous' and the other by Diogenes, give two books to the *Poetics*. The relevant portion of the catalogue of Diogenes has already been quoted. Zeller quotes the ancient commentators and scholiasts to show that the more ancient of them were in fact acquainted with two books on poetry, whereas we know of only one.¹²¹ The explanation of the term *Catharsis* in the *Poetics*, promised in the *Politics*, is in fact absent in *our Poetics*, an omission which has proved to be one of the chief sources of raw materials for the Aristotle industry even since the Renaissance. Now, this elusive explanation actually seems to have been there once, as suggested by traces gathered together by Aristotle scholars like Bernays, Susemihl, and Vahlen, in their editions, none of which is available at the National Library here. The tradition of the two books of the *Poetics* seems to have survived at least up to the High Middle Ages. Eustratius (c.A.D. 1100) cites the reference to the Homeric *Margites* in ch. IV of the *Poetics* in his *Ethics* (1141 a, 14) as occurring in book I of the *Poetics*, thereby implying the existence of a second book. The subscription of William of Moerbeke's Latin translation of the *Poetics* completed in 1278, incidentally, the first complete Latin translation of the *Poetics* reads: 'Primus Aristotelis de arte Poetica liber explicit'. Again, the reference to the 1st book of the *Poetics* implies the existence of a second book.¹²² Whether or not the manuscript used by Moerbeke actually had this second book, it seems certain it had a title or subtitle very similar to the one which has reached us in Moerbeke's translation. The present text of the work shows many other signs of being defective. For example, chapters VII to XVIII deal with the plot. But the continuity of the argument is broken by the intrusion of ch. XII, thought to be an interpolation, and ch. XV, the chapter on character, which really should have come after ch. XVIII, i.e., after the conclusion of the discussion on plot. These, and other lacunae in the text, too numerous to be listed here, lead us to think that the extant text is a mutilated version of an original, now lost. Thus, whether or not the *Politics* was originally in two books, there is a strong case for thinking that it was much longer than the existing version, and, moreover, the present text is not only fragmentary, it is also defective even in the parts that have survived.

Finally, the vexed question of the 'exoteric' and 'non-exoteric' works of Aristotle.¹²³ When dealing with Strabo the importance of this classification used by Strabo was duly pointed out, and a full discussion on it promised.



Cicero, Quintillian (b.c. A.D. 35), and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (fl. 1st c. B.C.) praise Aristotle not only for his subject-matter but also for his style. Cicero says that the works of Aristotle are to be recommended not only for their contents, 'but also for their elegance or sweetness of style.'¹²⁴ In the *De Inventione* Cicero declares that Aristotle has left the old orators far behind 'in the sweetness and conciseness of his teaching'.¹²⁵ In the *De Oratore* Cicero says :

And if Plato spoke with the voice of a god of things very far away from political debate,...if again Aristotle and Theophrastus style and Carneades...were eloquent and displayed charm of style and literary form, then, granting that the topics of their discourse may be found in certain other fields of research, yet their actual style is the peculiar product of this pursuit which we are now discussing and investigating, and of no other.¹²⁶

In the *De Finibus* of Cicero, Lucius Torquatus, a disciple of Epicurus, asks Cicero to explain his dislike of Epicurus :

The fact is, I think that you...dislike Epicurus because he has neglected the graces of style that you find in your Plato, Aristotle and Theophrastus.¹²⁷

A more direct praise of Aristotle's literary style is found in Cicero's *Academica* :

.. when your Stoic wise man aforesaid has told you these facts one syllable at a time, in will come Aristotle, pouring forth a golden stream of eloquence,...¹²⁸

Quintillian is also lavish in his praise of Aristotle's literary style. Thus Quintillian in the *Institutio Oratoria* :

Why should I dwell on the elegance of the rest of the Socratics ? or on Aristotle, with regard to whom I hesitate whether to praise him more for his knowledge, for the multitude of his writings, the sweetness of his style, the penetration revealed by his discoveries or the variety of the tasks which he essayed ?¹²⁹

Dionysius of Halicarnassus considers that of the philosophers Democritus, Plato, and Aristotle are the best as to style.¹³⁰

Nothing we have of Aristotle justifies, however, such fulsome praise of Aristotle's literary style, this repeated reference to his 'sweet style', his 'golden stream of eloquence'. The style of our Aristotle in fact displays just the opposite qualities. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that Cicero, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Quintillian must have had those writings in mind which have not survived, and which, probably, had been arranged for publication and subsequently published by the author himself. Indeed; except for the *Topica* and the *Rhetorica*,

the Aristotle that Cicero and Quintillian knew was not *our* Aristotle at all. They seem to have known 'their' Aristotle almost entirely through the Dialogues and other such popular writings.¹⁸¹ It seems, therefore, that Strabo meant just such works when he declared that only the *exoteric* works continued to be known and read after the death of Theophrastus and before the purchase of the library of Neleus by Apellicon. Fragments of such writings which have survived show that they were in fact written in a much more ornate style than any work we now possess. We have also the *Athenian Constitution*, discovered at the end of the last century in the sands of Egypt, which provides us with a similar kind of evidence. The evidence of this work, written sometime between 328 and 325 B. C., i.e., very late in Aristotle's life, is important, as it shows that a consciously literary style cannot be equated with Aristotle's early style, which would be a plausible argument if we took only the evidence of the Dialogues into account. This kind of style, may, therefore, be said to be the attribute of a particular kind of writing, probably the kind called 'exoteric' by Strabo.

Before positively identifying the *exoteric* with such kind of writing, we must first trace the history of the phrase. At this point we shall be obliged to refer to the original Greek phrase itself, which is *exotericoi logoi*, as the translators frequently do not retain the expression *exoteric*. Aristotle himself refers a number of times to the *exotericoi logoi* or the 'exoteric discourse'. In the *Politics* I, Aristotle uses the word *exoteric* to signify a subject not immediately related to the subject in hand. In the Loeb translation the sentence reads: 'However, this matter perhaps belongs to an investigation lying somewhat outside our subject', 'lying somewhat outside our subject' being a translation of the Greek word *exotericoteras*.¹⁸² In book II of the same work, again, we come across the statement:

...the rest of the discourse he [Socrates] has filled up with external topics, and about the sort of education it is proper for the guardians to have.¹⁸³

The word *exoteric* here has been used in almost the same sense as in the previous passage, 'external topics' being a translation of the Greek phrase *exother logois*. Book IV, ch. X of the *Physica* begins thus:

The subject of inquiry next in succession is 'time'. It will be well to begin with the questions which general reflections suggest as to its existence or non-existence and its nature.¹⁸⁴

'General reflections' here is the Loeb translator's rendering of the Greek *exotericon logon*. This is followed by a general discussion on the nature of Time which is not meant to be a thorough or conclusive



analysis of the problem. There is an implied contrast here between a strictly logical discussion and a general preliminary survey, a point which is better illustrated in Aristotle's two ethical tracts.

In the *Eudemian Ethics* at the beginning of book II we read :

Now all goods are either external or within the spirit, and of these two kinds the latter are preferable, as we class them even in the extraneous discourses.¹⁸⁵

Earlier in book I of the same work we read :

But if we are to speak about it concisely, we say that in the first place to assert the existence of a Form not only of good but of anything else is an expression of logic and a mere abstraction (but this has been considered in various ways both in extraneous discourses and in those on philosophical lines) ;¹⁸⁶

Here we are moving close to the heart of the matter ; for in both the passages 'extraneous discourses' is the translator's rendering of the Greek phrase *exoterikoi logoi*. Light is thrown on the meaning of the phrase in the context by the opening passage of sec. viii, book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, a passage which parallels the passage from book II of the *Eudemian Ethics* quoted above. Here, talking of testing the definition of Happiness Aristotle writes :

Accordingly we must examine our first principle not only as a logical conclusion deduced from certain premises but also in the light of the current opinions on the subject.¹⁸⁷

There is a clear juxtaposition here between 'logical conclusion' and 'current opinions'. Now, this passage is followed closely by a passage on the division of the goods into external and of the soul, a subject to which the passage in book II of the *Eudemian Ethics* is also devoted. In book I of the *Eudemian Ethics* we have already encountered the same juxtaposition between 'expression of logic' and *exoterikoi logoi*. Thus *exoterikoi logoi* here seems to mean popular notions without the severe discipline of a strictly logical structure. This is the meaning which the parallel passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics* suggests. Of particular interest in this context is the use of the Greek phrase in book VII of the *Politics* :

Believing therefore in the adequacy of much of what is said even in extraneous discourses on the subject of the best life, let us make use of these pronouncements now. For as regards at all events one classification of things good, putting them in three groups, external goods, goods of the soul and goods of the body, assuredly no body would deny that the ideally happy are bound to possess all three.¹⁸⁸

'Extraneous discourses' here is of course a translation of the Greek *exoterikoi logoi*. Obviously, the *Politics* are not 'extraneous discourses' as the word 'even' suggests in the context. Secondly, the use of the word 'even' further suggests the same kind of contrast between strictly logical or philosophical treatises on the one hand, and the *exoterikoi logoi* on the other as one finds in the two works on ethics, quoted earlier. And, finally, the reference to the 'classification of things' in the second sentence of the passage just quoted suggests some kind of a written work and not merely currently held opinion or oral discourses. The evidence here should, of course, be taken as suggestive rather than as conclusive.¹³⁹ In book III of the same work Aristotle refers to his own discourses in the same manner :

And again, the several recognized varieties of government can easily be defined ; in fact we frequently discuss them in our external discourses.¹⁴⁰

It is tempting to take this as a reference to his own oral discourses ; but, again, the evidence should be taken as indicative or suggestive, rather than as conclusive. For, 'discuss' here is the translator's rendering of the greek word *diorizometha*, *diorizo* in Greek meaning 'to lay down' 'to define', 'to discriminate', 'to set the limits of', etc. And also we must weigh against our temptation Aristotle's habit of quoting from the written works of other authors, and indeed from his own, using the same word.¹⁴¹ Again, there is the passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, already quoted, on the distinction between things made, *poietaon*, and things done, *prakton* : 'But making is different from doing a distinction we may accept from extraneous discourses [*exoterikoi logoi*].'¹⁴² It seems Aristotle is referring here to some written accounts, and not merely to some lectures or to popular opinion ; for it is highly unlikely that such a corner-stone of Aristotelian philosophy as the distinction between *praxis* and *poesis* was a matter of common conversation among the well-educated. In the same work elsewhere, the reference clearly seems to be to written works, perhaps by Aristotle himself :

Now on the subject of psychology some of the teaching current in extraneous discourses [*exoterikoi logoi*] is satisfactory and may be adopted here : ¹⁴³

In the *Metaphysics* XIII in the Loeb translation we read : '...most of the arguments have been made familiar already by the criticisms of other thinkers.'¹⁴⁴ As the translation here is less than satisfactory for our purpose, the translation of this passage in the Oxford Translations is being given side by side : 'for most of what we have to say has been repeatedly stated popular works'.¹⁴⁵ The 'popular works' of the Oxford

translator, who, incidentally, is Ross himself and 'criticisms of other thinkers' of the Loeb translator are, of course, renderings of the Greek phrase *exoterikon logon*. Again, the reference here seems to be to written works, an interpretation which obviously, has been accepted by Ross without reservation. The Loeb translator has been rash with his 'other thinkers': for the phrase *exoterikon logon* leaves it unstated here whether the discourse is by Aristotle himself, or by others. Zeller holds that the reference here must be to a work of Aristotle himself, otherwise he could not have taken a fuller discussion of the doctrine of ideas for granted.

The use of the word 'exoteric' in Aristotle has been analysed, and it has been found that the word has two broad meanings in Aristotle (i) that which *exists* outside, the external; and (ii) that which *goes out*, refers to the external.¹⁴⁶ The question is, however, about the meaning of the word in the phrase *exoterikoi logoi*.

In the passage quoted from book I, sec. ii of the *Politics*, Aristotle seems to have used the word *exoterikoteras* in the first of the two senses given above. The phrase *exother logoi* in the quotation given earlier from book II, sec. ii of the *Politics* has also, roughly, the same general sense. The same could be said of the use of the phrase in passage given from the *Physics* where a distinction has been drawn between 'general reflections' and a discussion proper. But in most of the other quotations given above, there is an implied suggestion that there are two kinds of discourses, exoteric and non-exoteric. In the passage from book I of the *Eudemian Ethics*, the contrast, not implied but explicit, is between logical or scientific discourses and exoteric discourses. If we accept the non-exoteric treatises as academic writings in strict logical structure, the *exoterikoi logoi* can only mean popular writings. In this sense, the word *exoterik* in the phrase *exoterikoi logoi* in the passages under review can be taken to have been used in the second of the two meanings given above, signifying works intended for *outsiders, going out* of the school for the use of the public at large.

In Aristotle himself, then, we find this contrast between 'exoteric' and 'non-exoteric' writings firmly established. There are numerous references in Aristotle to a class of writing which he calls 'published treatises', *ekdedomenoi logoi*. For example, he says at the end of ch. XV of the *Poetics*: 'But of this enough has been said in our published treatises',¹⁴⁷ implying, it seems, that the *Poetics* as we know it or as Aristotle left it was not meant to be published.

The division of the Aristotelian *Corpus* itself into two classes of writings, exoteric and non-exoteric became established quite early, the

non-exoteric writings being the technical, academic treatises, and the 'exoteric' being those which are less rigorous in their treatment of subjects. There is a near-unanimity among the ancients on this point. Coming to the late Byzantine period only, we meet with two exceptions. Eustratius (C.A.D. 1100) understands by the phrase *exoterikoi logoi* 'common opinion', and Pseudo-Ammonius (Heliodorus X, C.A.D. 1367) understands the phrase to mean oral instruction. But to go back to the ancients, we have already come across Strabo on 'exoteric discourses'. Clearly, the phrase meant for Strabo the non-philosophic, non-scientific writings; because though these existed, it is because of the non-availability of the philosophic writings that the older peripatetics could not philosophise properly. Cicero in the *De Finibus* says:

Their [of Aristotle and Theophrastus] books on the subject of Chief Good fall into two classes, one popular in style, and this class they used to call their *exoteric* works; the other more carefully wrought.¹⁴⁸

In contradistinction to the 'exoteric' writings, Cicero in this passage calls the scientific writings *Commentarii*, i.e., continuous expositions, translated as 'carefully wrought' in the Loeb edition. It is clear from a passage in his *Letters to Atticus* that Cicero has especially the Dialogues in mind when using the term 'exoteric'. Speaking of the style and form of his own Dialogues, Cicero says: 'I am giving an introduction to each book, as Aristotle does in the work he called the *Exoterics*'.¹⁴⁹ Plutarch also has the Dialogues in mind when he writes:

Now as to the ideas,—for which he quarrels with Plato,—Aristotle, by moving this matter at every turn, and alleging all manner of doubts concerning them, in his Ethics, in his Physics, and in his Exoterical Dialogues, seems to some rather obstinately than philosophically to have disputed against these doctrines,.....¹⁵⁰

Gellius uses two terms, 'acroatic' and 'exoteric' in his classification of Aristotle's works:

The philosopher Aristotle, the teacher of King Alexander, is said to have had two forms of the lectures and instructions which he delivered to his pupils. One of these was the kind called *exoterika*, or "exoteric", the other *akroatika*, or "acroatic." Those were called "exoteric" which gave training in rhetorical exercises, logical subtlety, and acquaintance with politics; those were called "acroatic" in which a more profound and recondite philosophy was discussed, which related to the contemplation of nature or dialectic discussions. To the practice of the "acroatic" training which I have mentioned he devoted the

morning hours in the Lyceum, and he did not ordinarily admit any pupil to it until he had tested his ability, his elementary knowledge, and his zeal and devotion to study. The exoteric lectures and exercises in speaking he held at the same place in the evening and opened them generally to young men without distinction. ¹⁵¹

This division of Aristotle's writings into two classes, 'acroatic' or 'acroamatic' and 'exoteric', one for the general public and the other for the master's scholars, is well-established among the late Alexandrian commentators, such as Simplicius and Philoponus¹⁵², as also earlier in Galen (A.D. 129-199)¹⁵³, who explains that the exoteric texts were meant for the public and the 'acroatic' texts only for the master's own scholars. Gellius quotes from Andronicus of Rhodes the famous correspondence between Alexander and Aristotle. Whatever the authenticity of these letters, judging by the fact that they have been quoted by Plutarch and Simplicius, they seem to have been accepted as an integral part of the Aristotelian tradition. Thus Gellius :

I have added copies of both letters, taken from the book of the philosopher Andronicus. I was particularly charmed with the slender thread of elegant brevity in the letter of each.

"Alexander to Aristotle, Greeting".

"You have not done right in publishing your acroatic lectures; for wherein, pray, shall I differ from other men, if these lectures, by which I was instructed, become the common property of all? As for me, I should wish to excel in acquaintance with what is noblest, rather than in power. Farewell.

"Aristotle to King Alexander, Greeting".

"You have written to me regarding my acroatic lectures, thinking that I ought to have kept them secret. Know then that they have both been made public and not made public. For they are intelligible only to those who have heard me. Farewell, King Alexander." ¹⁵⁴

Plutarch in his *Life of Alexander* repeats the story, quotes the same letter from Alexander to Aristotle, and summarises Aristotle's reply. He introduces the anecdote thus :

It would appear that Alexander not only received from his master his ethical and political doctrines, but also participated in those secret and more profound teachings which philosophers designate by the special terms "acroamatic" and "epoptic", and do not impart to many. For after he had crossed into Asia, and

when he learned that certain treatises on these recondite matters had been published in books by Aristotle, he wrote him a letter on behalf of philosophy, and put it in plain language.¹⁵⁵

Then follow the letter itself and a summary of Aristotle's reply which we have already come across in the original in Gellius. A disturbing suggestion is implied in the last two quotations: that Aristotle deliberately kept a certain part on his teaching secret. Plutarch's gloss on Aristotle's reply is important in this connection: 'for in truth his treatise on metaphysics is of no use for those who would either teach or learn the science, but is written as a memorandum for those already trained therein.'

Most of the early commentators agree, however, that the 'exoteric' writings are those which, couched in a popular style, were intended for the general public, and the 'acroatic' writings are those which were written in a more severe style and constructed along strictly logical lines.¹⁵⁶ In Aristotle scholarship this division can almost certainly be traced as far back as Andronicus of Rhodes, the source of the two letters for Gellius which Plutarch also quotes. Thus a continuity of this tradition in Aristotle scholarship can be traced from Andronicus through Cicero, Strabo, Plutarch right down to the later commentators and even to the Middle Ages and St. Thomas.¹⁵⁷ And, as has already been seen, the origin of it all can be discovered in Aristotle himself.

The precise meaning of these terms and their significance have been the subjects of endless dispute, and a whole body of scholarly literature originating, as Grant points out,¹⁵⁸ with Octavianus Ferrarius in 1575, has sprung up around them in modern times. The five great 19th century landmarks here are Bernays, Spengel, Grote, Grant, and Zeller. The present writer has not come across any recent work which seriously questions or adds anything new to Zeller's final summing up of the discussion which began with Bernays in 1863. This is not the place for a detailed discussion of the opinions of these scholars. We shall therefore have to be satisfied with a summary of the views of each, i.e., of Grote, Grant, and Zeller. According to Grote the phrase *exoterikoi logoi* in Aristotle himself means merely a particular approach, not any particular class of writing 'a dialectic process of turning over and criticizing diverse opinions and probabilities.' Incidentally, Zeller originally held that 'exoteric discourses' meant not any writings at all, but the conversations and discourses of cultivated men, a view he rejected later. Grote interprets the use of the phrase in Aristotle scholarship, that is, the meaning of the phrase as it has been used by Cicero onwards, as meaning popular writings as opposed to strictly philosophical writings.

Grote dismisses the idea that Aristotle promulgated a public as opposed to a mystic or secret doctrine. Hence, he maintains, *exoteric* and *esoteric* are not correctly opposed terms. The term *esoteric*, he goes on to add, might have some relevance with reference to the doctrines of Pythagoras, or even to Plato, but in Aristotle *exoteric* does not mean any doctrine, but a way of discussing things.

Grant, agreeing with Grote, points out that *exoterikoi logoi* cannot be exclusively identified with Aristotle's lost Dialogues, as Bernays did. The writers of the later empire, accustomed to the idea of mystical and hierophantic teachings as professed by the neo-Platonists and the neo-Pythagoreans, misconstrued the meaning of the term *exoteric* and created the fable of an *esoteric* doctrine of Aristotle. The theory has not been taken seriously since the Renaissance. Grant's conclusion is that *exoteric* means 'external' non-philosophical, non-scientific treatment of a subject, opposed to...internal, appropriate, and scientific treatment of it.¹⁵⁹ Grant points out that Aristotle himself uses the term in three different senses, one of them being 'popular' as opposed to 'philosophical' discussion.

Zeller also accepts the view that the term *exoteric*, as used by the early scholars and sometimes even by Aristotle himself, means popular works, as opposed to scientific works. However, Zeller points out, Aristotle did not mean all his writings to be published; some of his writings were meant primarily for the use of the scholars of the school as class texts. In other words, Zeller finds the accounts given by Gellius, Galen, and Plutarch fully acceptable. And, Aristotle adorned only the published works with a literary style, so much praised by Cicero and Quintillian. Zeller summarily dismisses the theory of a secret doctrine in Aristotle. To Zeller, 'published works' and *exoterikoi logoi* are synonymous expressions. Zeller explains the system of cross-references in Aristotle, particularly the confusing instances of two works quoting each other, by the hypothesis that none of the works was published in a final shape and hence could be added to as occasions arose,

We have Aristotle's own words to support the view that at least some of the works were meant for his students primarily. The closing words of the *Topica* consist of a series of advice, obviously meant for his students.¹⁶⁰ At the end of the *De Sophisticis Elenchis*, Aristotle, after apologizing for the inherent limitations of a work which is breaking an entirely new ground, thanks his listeners and students;

If, then, it seems to you after inspection that, such being the situation as it existed at the start, our investigation is in a satisfactory condition compared with the other enquiries that have

been developed by tradition, there must remain for all of you, or for our students, the task of extending us your pardon for the shortcomings of the enquiry, and for the discoveries thereof your warm thanks.¹⁸¹

There is no reason to think that the *Topica* and the companion work *De Sophisticis Elenchis* could have been merely lecture notes for the master's own use. Zeller points out that there is an implied address to the readers in addition to the address to the listeners in the passage last quoted.¹⁸² Besides, Aristotle himself refers to the *Topica* frequently in his later works; yet, the wording of the concluding peroration is such that it would be out of place in a work arranged for publication by the author himself. Thus it acquired the status of a work which was not actually published, but was in use nevertheless as a separate work. In use among whom?—his students no doubt. The book V of the *Metaphysics*, a glossary of words without a beginning or an end, could never have been published by Aristotle in its present form; yet Aristotle frequently refers to it in his other works. Hence it could only have been some notes circulated by Aristotle among his students. It is now agreed by Aristotle scholars that the *De Anima* was meant for the students of Aristotle.

An interesting clue is provided by these undoubtedly unpublished works; for, works which quote or refer to these unpublished works must have been unpublished works themselves. And this net-work of such cross-references cover almost the whole of the extant *Corpus*.

We said just now that the *Topica* could not have been the master's lecture notes. This brings us to a theory which deserves a discussion here. This theory holds that the unintelligibility of some of the extant writings of Aristotle may be due to the fact that they are hypomnematic, i.e., lecture notes for his personal use. A few of the extant works may indeed have been lecture notes, e.g., the *Anatomy*, and Bk XII of the *Metaphysics*. But this could not have been true of the majority of the writings. Apart from anything else, the style of writing employed in these treatises precludes such a possibility. The cross-references in the majority of the writings cover a range of courses so widely divergent in date that they could only have been of help to the students when actually available to them for consultation in a written down form. Besides, in many cases, in the *Natural Philosophy* for example, the treatment of the subject-matter is too detailed for the purpose of oral teaching. Finally, we have the evidence, already referred to, of Eudemus asking Theophrastus for the correct wordings of a passage in the *Physics*. If the *Physics* was written down, why not the other

treatises? We also know that Theophrastus and Eudemus reproduced *verbatim* several passages of the *Metaphysics*. Eudemus also treated the *Ethics* in the same manner. All this seems to confirm the 'written memoranda' theory.

Another theory, propounded by Oncken¹⁰³ which must be considered dead is that the whole or a great part of the extant *Corpus* consists of students' notes of the master's lectures. It is a comfortable theory which would explain many of the shortcomings of the existing texts. Yet, the majority of such defects are really stylistic peculiarities common to all the works, and hence should be ascribed to Aristotle himself.¹⁰⁴ It should be pointed out, however, that at least one leading modern expert on the *Poetics* is in favour of accepting the two variants of the 'note theory', mentioned above.¹⁰⁵ Another fanciful theory sees such works as abstract made by some student of the Alexandrian age who combined together different works, sometimes by different people.¹⁰⁶ It has long been recognised that the extant texts of Aristotle may represent so many layers of revisions, additions, and editing that what we have now may not at all be what Aristotle actually wrote.¹⁰⁷ This is certainly one way of doing away with the whole problem altogether. Another equally effective way of doing the same service to Aristotle scholarship has been tried by an ingenious modern scholar who, on the basis of a close study of the texts and their stylistic and linguistic peculiarities, has come to the conclusion that the extant texts were written by Theophrastus in fact, and not by Aristotle at all.¹⁰⁸ However, instead of engaging in the no doubt useful task of peeling the Aristotelian onion to find out the *real* Aristotle, let us proceed, for the time being at any rate, on the assumption that despite all defects what we have now is substantially what Aristotle wrote.

Now, where does the *Poetics* fit into all this? The first question we must answer is whether the *Poetics* is an exoteric discourse i.e., a published discourse in the popular style which is worthy of Cicero's phrase, 'the golden stream of eloquence'. The answer to this must be a straight 'no'. The style of the *Poetics* is so crabbed, bald, and unornamented, that it cannot be considered an example of what Cicero and Quintillian had in mind. Besides, if with Zeller we equate *exoterikoi* with *ekdedomenoi* 'published', the text of the *Poetics* excludes itself from this category of writings: for Aristotle says at the end of ch. XV of the *Poetics* *apropos* of strictly poetic rules to be observed by the tragic poet: 'But of this enough has been said in our published treatises,' implying thereby that the *Poetics* is not a published work, *ekdedomenoi logoi*.

Lastly, the question whether we should take the text of the *Poetics* as 'hypomnematic'. Apart from the style of the work which makes the 'note theory' highly improbable in this particular case, the many references to the *Poetics* in the *Rhetoric* as a separate work practically rule out any such possibility. There is no need to discuss in detail the applicability of the other variants of the 'note theory' to the *Poetics*.

The paper may be brought to a close with a brief summary of the findings given so far. The *Poetics*, then, is a work common to both the Alexandrian and the post-Andronican tradition of the texts of Aristotle. An 'acroatic' and unpublished tract, not a 'hypomnematic' or an 'exoteric work', it was written during Aristotle's second Athenian period. It came after the *Politics* VIII and before the *Rhetoric*. Originally the text must have been longer than what we now possess. It is the sole surviving example of a whole group of writings devoted by Aristotle to the study of the 'creative sciences' as he calls them.

This brief survey of the history of the Aristotelian *Corpus* in Antiquity with a special emphasis on the position of the *Poetics vis a vis* the *Corpus* as a whole provides us with a take-off point for a consideration of the history of the treatise in the Middle Ages. This essay, therefore, may be taken as the first part of a projected two-part study of the history of the *Poetics* upto the Renaissance.

NOTES

(At least one of the places of publication, unless otherwise mentioned, is London)

1. G.E.R. Lloyd, *Aristotle: The Growth and Structure of His Thought*, Cambridge, 1968, I, i, gives a brief and useful survey of some of the ground covered in this article.
2. For a discussion of the old accounts of Aristotle's life, see E. Zeller, *Aristotle and the Earlier Peripatetics*, tr. B.F.C. Costelloe & J.H. Muirhead, 1897, 2 vols, (henceforward referred to as Zeller), I, p. 2, n. 1. Of the six extant old accounts of Aristotle's life, one in three rescensions, the biography by Diogenes Laertius, the most copious of them all, and the smaller accounts given by *The Anonymous Menagii* and *Pseudo-Ammonius*, printed in G. Gabriel Cobet, *Diogenes Laertii de Clarorum Philosophorum etc.*, Paris, 1850, Appendix by Westermann, pp. 10-14 are available at the National Library, Calcutta (henceforward referred to as the N. L.). For sheer weight of documentation and organized presentation of data, Zeller on the subject in hand remains unsurpassed. W.D. Ross, *Aristotle*, 1953 repr. (henceforward referred to as Ross) is a brief and convenient introduction to the subject, incorporating as it does the advances made by twentieth century scholarship on Zeller. Naturally, the exhaustiveness of Zeller is beyond the scope of its two brief introductory chapters. Of the important 19th century works on Aristotle's life and works, G. Grote, *Aristotle*, ed. A. Bain, tr. G.C. Robertson, 2 vols, 1872 (henceforward referred to as Grote); Sir Alexander



Grant, *Aristotle*, 1910 and *idem*, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, 2 vols, 1874 (henceforward referred to as 'Grant, *Ethics*') are available at the N.L. and have been found most useful. Very many important works of 19th century German scholarship viz. Rose, Susenmihl, Stahr, Brandis, Heitz, and others are not available at the N. L. It is shocking to find that the great Berlin edition (Bekker) of Aristotle's works is not at the N. L. either, nor does the N. L. possess the Aristotelian *Fragments* in any edition whatsoever (see n. 34 *infra*). In respect of the works of 19th century German scholarship mentioned above, one should add that as Zeller in many respects can be said to have superseded them and as Zeller with meticulous care indicates at every step his agreement or disagreement with the earlier scholars, one can carry along without floundering too much. This is not to say that this is a desirable or satisfactory way of performing a scholarly task. It is frustrating to find J. W. Blakesley, *A Life of Aristotle*, Cambridge, 1839, and Ingemar Düring, *Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition*, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, LXIII, 2, Göteborg, absent from the N. L. Catalogue. After Zeller the most important landmark in Aristotle scholarship is W. Jaeger, *Aristotle*, tr. R. Robinson, 2nd ed. (1948), Oxford, (1960 repr.) who may be said to have given a new direction to Aristotle scholarship. The recent trend in Aristotle scholarship, however, is a swing away from Jaeger (see *infra* n. 109). In this connection see also J. H. Randall, *Aristotle*, N. Y. 1960, ch. II: 'Aristotle's Life and Corpus'

3. It is interesting to note that Aristotle himself never mentions the Academy or that he ever studied in it. This is, however, not to deny the influence of Platonism on early Aristotle. See J. H. Randall, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
4. Zeller, I, p. 19.
5. *Ibid*, I, p. 25.
6. See *Ibid*, I, p. 27. n. 2, on the derivation of the word 'Peripatetic'. The most generally held view is that the word is derived from Aristotle's custom of strolling up and down in the covered loggia of the gymnasium attached to the lyceum, i.e., a temple of Apollo Lykeios, while lecturing to his students Gellius, *Attic Nights*, 3 vols, Loeb, tr. J.C. Rolfe, 1927-28, XX,v, 5-6, says that Aristotle lectured to his students in the morning and in the evening, calling his lectures '*dellinos peripatos*', "the evening walk"—the other '*eothinos*' or the "morning walk"; for on both occasions he walked as he spoke. Thus again Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Loeb, 2 vols, tr. R. D. Hicks, 1925, I, 17: 'Some schools [of philosophers] took their name from cities, as the Elians and the Megaricans, the Eretrians and the Cyrenaics; others from localities, as the Academics and the stoics; others from incidental circumstances, as the Peripatetics.' 'Attention may be drawn to the phrase 'incidental circumstances' here, as different and separate from 'localities'. His authority, of course, is Hermippus whom Diogenes quotes later: 'Hermippus in his *Lives* mentions that he [Aristotle] was absent as Athenian envoy at the court of Phillip when Xenocrates became the head of the Academy, and that on his return, when he saw the school under a new head, he made choice of a public walk in the Lyceum where he would walk up and down discussing philosophy with his pupils until it was time to rub themselves with oil. Hence the name "Peripatetic". But others say that it was given to him because when Alexander was recovering from an illness and taking daily walks, Aristotle joined him and talked with him on certain matters.' (*Ibid*, V, 2). There is another

view which holds that the word 'peripatetic' is derived from the 'Peripatos' of the Lyceum, the meeting place of the school. In Liddell and Scott (q. V.) the three meanings of the word 'Peripatos' are: (i) a walking about, walking; (ii) a place for walking, a covered walk; (iii) a discourse during a walk, a philosophical discussion. Most of the ancient authorities hold the first view, as also do Liddell and Scott (q. V.); Zeller, *loc. cit.*; Ross, p. 5; Grote, I, p. 10. Zeller points out (*loc. cit.* and I, p. 13, n. 3) that the use of the word 'Peripatetics' was not confined to the Aristotelians originally, and that it was only later that the word acquired a special meaning. By the time of Strabo, however, the word had acquired this special meaning (cf. *The Geography of Strabo*, Bohn's Classical Library, tr. with notes, H. C. Hamilton and W. Falconer, 1889-93, XIII, I, 54).

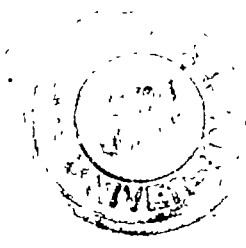
7. Gellius, *op. cit.*, XIII, v.
8. *Ed. cit.* and *The Geography of Strabo*, Loeb, 8 vols, tr. H. L. Jones, 1917-24.
9. Strabo, tr. Hamilton and Falconer, *ed. cit.*, 13: 54.
10. See Zeller, I, p. 137, n. 1.
11. Strabo, *ed. cit.*, b. XII, ciii, 16, *fini*.
12. Plutarch, *The Life of Sulla*, xxvi *init*; vol. IV of *Plutarch's Lives*, Loeb (10 vols), 1916.
13. On Andronicus of Rhodes, see Zeller, I, p. 49; Grant, *Ethics*, I, pp. 8-9, 12, 15-18. Grote, I, pp. 53 ff. I have greatly missed Zeller on Andronicus in his *Philosophy of the Greeks* which, unfortunately, is not available at the N. L.
14. Porphyry, 'The Life of Plotinus', 24, in *Plotinus The Ethical Treatises*, tr. S. Mackenna, vol. I, The Library of Philosophical Translations, 1917.
15. Quoted Grant, *Ethics*, I, p. 8.
16. *Ibid*, I, p. 9.
17. Grote, I, p. 57.
18. D. J. Allan. *The Philosophy of Aristotle*, 1952, p. 11.
19. Grote, I, p. 56. n. a.
20. Grant, *Aristotle*, *ed. cit.*, p. 40.
21. Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists*, 7 vols, Loeb, 1924-41, 214, d.e.
22. *Ibid*, 3b.
23. On Aristotle's Will see Zeller, I, p. 37, n. 4; Grant, *Aristotle*, *ed. cit.*, pp. 26-28. Zeller refutes Grant's argument that the Will could be spurious.
24. Zeller, I, pp. 137-40 accepts the story of Strabo upto this point.
25. For an account of scholarly doubts on the veracity of Strabo's account, see Zeller, I, p. 139, n. 1.
26. Grote, I, p. 52, n. a.
27. *Ibid*, I, p. 54.
28. *Loc. cit.* It is a great pity, Grote presents no evidence to support this assertion.
29. Grant, *Aristotle*, *ed. cit.*, p. 33.
30. Grant, *Ethics*, I, pp. 5 ff.
31. *Ibid*, I, p. 12.
32. Zeller, I, p. 141.
33. On Eudemus see Zeller, I, pp. 135-36, 143 ff., 148; II, xix.
34. Both the letter of Eudemus and the reply from Theophrastus have been duly collected by the indefatigable V. Rose, *Fragmenta Aristotelis*. Unfortunately, these *Fragmenta* are not available at the N.L., either in Rose's original edition, or in the recent edition of Ross and Walzer (1955), or even in Oxford Translations (vol. XII).

35. For the whole discussion see Zeller, I, pp.145 ff.
36. See D.W. Lucas, *Aristotle : Roetlcs*, Oxford, 1968, p.x
37. For the following discussion see Zeller, I, ii; Grant, *Ethics*, I, pp. 9ff.; Grote, I, ii.
38. Mentioned by Zeller, I, p.48,n.3 ; see also Ross, pp. 7 ff.
39. Ross, p.15.
40. Both are available together in *Fragmenta Aristotelis* edited by Rose and Heitz in the Berlin and Paris editions respectively of Aristotle's works, unfortunately not available in Calcutta. See note 34 *supra*.
41. On the works in *Our Corpus Aristotelicum* mentioned in the catalogue of Diogenes Laertius, see Zeller, I, p.50,n.1.
42. See Zeller, I, p.51,n.4 ; Grote, I, p.41,n.a
43. Diogenes Laertius, *ed.cit.*, V,21.
44. *Ibid.* I,1.
45. See Zeller, I, p.51.
46. Diogenes Laertius, *ed.cit.*, V,1,2.
47. Athenaeus, *ed cit.*, xiii 589c ; xv, 696f.
48. Grant, *Ethics*, I, pp 10 ff. Grote, I, pp 48 ff. On the reliability of the catalogues see Grant, *Ethics*, I, p.9 ff. Grant, however, is clearly in the wrong when he says that 'All the books mentioned in the Alexandrian catalogue are now lost ; only a few fragments of them have been preserved ..' Zeller rightly points out the significance of the fact that some of *our* Aristotle are in fact in this catalogue as well.
49. Mentioned by D.W.Lucas, *op cit.*, p.xiii, n.1. The work of Moraux which discusses the ancient catalogues of Aristotle's works, *Les Listes anciennes de ouvrages D'A.x*, Louvain, 1951, is not available at the N L.
50. Zeller, I, p.51,n 6.
51. The lists are in Rose.
52. Zeller, I, p. 52, n.2.
53. Grote, I, p. 60.
54. Grant, *Aristotle, ed. cit.*, p.39.
55. Grote, I,p. 40. n.b.
56. On the problem of the classification of the works of Aristotle, see Zeller, I, pp. 53 ff.; Grant, *Aristotle, ed. cit.*, pp. 42 ff.; Grote, I, pp.76-78 ; Ross, pp. 7 ff.
57. Ross, pp. 7 ff. divides Aristotle's works into three broad groups : (i) popular writings, (ii) notes for scientific writings ; and (iii) the scientific works themselves. Ross's classification of the works according to their subject matter (pp.9 ff.) is somewhat different from Zeller's.
58. See Zeller, I, pp.181 ff.
59. Diogenes Laertius, *ed.cit.*, V, 28. On other ancient authorities on this two-fold division of Aristotle's works see Zeller, I, p.181, n.1.
60. *Ibid*, I, p 181, n.2 & 3.
61. *On the Soul*, tr.W.S. Hett, Loeb, 1935, III, ix, 432b, 26 ; 433a, 3.
62. *Ibid*, III, x,433a, 10.
63. *The Nicomachean Ethics*, tr.H Rackham, Loeb, 1926, VI, ii, 1-2.
64. *Politics*, tr.H. Rackham, Loeb, 1932, VII, xiii, 1333a, 26. For a discussion of this division in Aristotle between 'theoretic' and 'practical' philosophy, see Zeller, II, xi.

65. *The Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. cit., I, i, 1-2.
66. *Ibid.*, I, iii, 6-7.
67. *Ibid.*, II, ii, *init.*
68. See *The Metaphysics : I-IX*, tr. H. Tredennick, Loeb, 1947, p. xxxi; Zeller, I, p. 76, n.3; Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 169; Ross, p. 13.
69. *The Metaphysics : I-IX*, ed. cit., II (a), i, 993b, 20
70. See Zeller, I, p. 97, n.1; p. 98, n.1. Modern scholarship, however, holds it to be genuine. See Ross, p. 14
71. 'The Eudemian Ethics' in *Athenian Constitution, Eudemian Ethics, Virtues and Vices*, tr. H. Rackham, Loeb, 1935, I, i, 1214a, 10.
72. *The Metaphysics : I-IX*, ed. cit., VI, i, 1025b, 18.
73. *Ibid.*, VI, ii, 1026b, 5-6.
74. 'Topica', in *Posterior Analytics, Topica*, tr. H. Tredennick & E.F. Forster, Loeb, 1960, VI, vi, 145a, 15.
75. *Ibid.*, VIII, i, 157a, 10.
76. *The Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. cit., VI, iii, 1139b, 15.
77. *Ibid.*, VI, iv, *init.*
78. *The Metaphysics*, XII, ix, 1076a, 1, in *The Metaphysics X-XIV; The Oeconomica, The Magna Moralia*, tr. H. Tredennick & G.C. Armstrong, Loeb, 1935.
79. *The Metaphysics, I-IX*, ed. cit., IX, ii, 1046b, 2.
80. For a discussion of this question, see Zeller, I, pp. 181 ff.
81. See *Ibid.*, I, p. 183.
82. *The 'Art' of Rhetoric*, tr. J.H. Freese, Loeb, 1926, I, ii, 1356a, 25.
83. *The Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. cit., I, ii, 6.
84. Zeller, I, pp. 154 ff. See also Ross, pp. 17 ff.
85. See Zeller, I, p. 154, n.4; p. 155, n. i.
86. *Meteorologica*, tr. H.D.P. Lee, Loeb, 1952, I, vii, 345a, 1.
87. *Politics*, ed. cit., V, x, 1311b, 1.
88. *Rhetoric*, ed. cit., II, 1399b, 12.
89. In *Philologus*, IV, 10 ff., referred to by Zeller, I, p. 154, n.4. Unfortunately the journal is not available at the N.L.
90. 347 B.C. according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, latest ed.; according to other books of reference and the notes in the edition referred to here, he died in c.355 B.C.
91. *The Metaphysics*, ed. cit., I, ix, 991a, 1; XII, viii, 1073b, 17.
92. *The Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. W.D. Ross, vol. IX of the Oxford Tr., VII, xiv, 1153b, 5; X, ii, *init.*
93. *Historia Animalium*, tr. D.W. Thompson, vol. IV of the Oxford Tr., II, v.
94. *Ibid.*, VIII, ix.
95. Referred to by Zeller, I, p. 154, n.4.
96. *Categories*, tr. E.M. Edghill, vol. I of the Oxford Tr., iv, 2a; ix, *fini.*
97. *Physica*, tr. R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gay, vol. II of the Oxford Tr., IV, xi, 219b, 20.
98. *Rhetoric*, Loeb ed. II, vii, 4; Oxford Tr., 1385a, 25. It should be mentioned, however, that Ross, p. 18, n.3 warns against treating these references as conclusive rather than as significant.
99. *Analytica Priora*, Tr. A. J. Jenkinson, vol. I of the Oxford Tr., II, 24 *init.*
100. *Physica*, ed. cit., III, iii, 202b, 10.

101. *Metaphysics I-IX* ed. cit., V, v, init.
102. *Ibid*, V, xxiv, fin.
103. *Ibid*, V, xxx, 1025a, 25.
104. *Rhetoric*, ed. cit., III, ii, 1404b, 4.
105. *Politics*, ed. cit., VII, xv, 1336b, 25.
106. Zeller, I, pp. 157 ff.
107. W. Jaeger, *Aristotle*, tr. R. Robinson, 2nd ed. (1948), Oxford, 1960 repr.
108. Ross, pp. 17ff ; p. 19, n. 2.
109. See G. E. R. Lloyd, *Aristotle : the Growth and Structure of his Thought*, Cambridge, 1968, pp. 19ff. ; J. H. Randall, *op. cit.*, ch ii ; Marjorie Grene, *A Portrait of Aristotle*, 1963, ch. i.
110. On the following discussion, see Zeller, I, p. 102, n. 1 , D. W. Lucas, *op. cit.* pp. xli-xiv.
111. *Rhetoric*, ed. cit., I, xi, fin.
112. *Ibid*, III, i, fin.
113. *Ibid*, III, ii, 1404b, 2.
114. *Ibid*, III, ii, 1404b, 5.
115. *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, tr. and n., S. H. Butcher, 4th ed. Dover repr., 1951, xxi, 1457b, 2.
116. *Rhetoric*, III, ii, 1405a, 8.
117. *Ibid*, III, xviii, 1419b, 7.
118. *Politics*, ed. cit., VIII, vii, 4 (1341b. 35).
119. See Jaeger, *op. cit.*, pp. 263 ff. ; Ross, p. 19, n. 1.
120. See Zeller, I, p. 102, n. 2
121. *Ibid*, loc. cit.
122. D. W. Lucas, *op. cit.*, p. xiv., The existence of a second book has been denied by A.P. McMohan, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, xxviii, (1914), pp. 1-46 (ref. D. W. Lucas, *op. cit.*, p. xiii, n. 2. The Journal is not available at the N.L.)
123. For a discussion of this highly controversial subject, see Grote, I, pp. 62 ff ; Grant, *Ethics*, Appendix I 'B' ('On the *exotericoi logoi*') ; Zeller, I, pp. 106 ff. ; G. E. R. Lloyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 9 ff.
124. 'sed dicendi quoque incredibili quadam eum copia tum etiam suavitate' : Cicero, *Top.* 13, quoted by Zeller, I, p. 106, n. 4. I have not been able to trace this work in English translation in the catalogue of the N. L.
125. Quoted by Zeller, loc. cit
126. Cicero, *De Oratore*, tr. E. W. Sutton, and H. Rackham, 2 vols, Loeb, 1942, I, xi, 49.
127. Idem, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, tr. H. Rackham, Loeb, 1914, I, v, 14.
128. Idem, *Academica*, in *De Natura Deorum, Academica*, tr. H. Rackham, Loeb. 1933, II, xxxviii, 119.
129. Quintilian, *Instituto Oratoria*, tr. H. E. Butler, 4 vols, Loeb, 1921-22, X, i, 83.
130. Quoted by Zeller, loc. cit
131. *Politics*, ed. cit., I, ii, 1254a, 30.
132. *Ibid*, II, ii, 1264b, 35.
133. *Physics*, tr. P. H. Wicksteed and F. M. Cornford, 2 vols, Loeb, 1924, 1934, IV, x, init. (217b, 30).
134. *The Eudemian Ethics*, ed. cit., II, i, 1 (1218b. 30)
135. *Ibid*, I, viii, 5-6 (1217b, 20)

136. *The Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. cit., I, viii, *init.*
137. *Politics*, ed. cit., VII, i, 1323a, 20.
138. See Zeller, I, p. 115 n. 4 for a full discussion of the significance of this passage.
139. *Politics*, ed. cit., III, iv, 1278b, 30.
140. See Zeller, I, p. 116, n.
141. *The Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. cit., VI, iv, *init.*
142. *Ibid*, I, xiii, 1102a, 25.
143. *Metaphysics X-XIV*, ed. cit., XIII, i, 1076a, 28.
144. *Metaphysics* tr. W. D. Ross. vol. VIII of the Oxford tr., XIII, i, 1076a, 25.
145. See Grant, *Ethics*, ed. cit., I, p. 407 ; Zeller, I, p. 119, n. 1.
146. *Poetics*, ed. cit., XV, *finl.* (1454b,17). For a detailed discussion of the various interpretations of the Greek word *ekdedomenoi* see Zeller I, p. 108, n. 3.
147. *De Finibus*, ed. cit., V, v, *init* (12). For the division of Aristotle's works into two groups 'acroatic' or 'acroamatic' and 'exoteric' in Simplicus and Philoponus, see Zeller, I, p. 111, n. 4. See also Grote, I, p. 62, n. a on this passage, especially on Cicero's use of the words 'limiatius' and 'commentarii'.
148. Cicero, *Letters to Atticus*, tr. E. O. Winstedt, Loeb, 3 vols, 1912, IV, xvi, 2.
149. Plutarch, 'Against Colotes the Epicurean', *Plutarch's Morals*, corr. and rev. W. W. Goodwin, intro. R. W. Emerson, 5 vols. 1870, vol. V, pp. 355-56.
150. Gellius, *Attic Nights*, ed. cit., XX, v.
151. See Zeller, I, p. 111, n. 4.
152. Quoted by Zeller, *loc. cit.* The text of Galen's *Natural Faculties* in the Loeb edition, the only edition available at the N. L., is complete only upto bk. III and does not contain the passage in question which occurs in bk. IV (758 k).
153. Gellius, *loc. cit.*
154. Plutarch, 'Life of Alexander', vii, 3-4, in *Plutarch's Lives*, vol. VII, tr. B. Perrin, Loeb, 1949.
155. See Zeller, I, p. 113, nn. 1, 2 and 3.
156. See Grote, I, p. 64.
157. Grant, *Ethics*, I, p. 397.
158. *Ibid*, I, p. 399.
159. *Topica*, ed. cit., 163b, 15 ff.
160. *De Sophisticis Elenchis*, tr. W. A. Pickard-Cambridge, vol. I of the Oxford Tr., XXXIV, *finl.*
161. Zeller, I, p. 128, n. 4.
162. *Ibid*, I, p. 133, n. 1.
163. *Ibid*, I, p. 134, n. 2.
164. Lane Cooper, *The Poetics of Aristotle: Its Meaning and Influence*; N. Y., 1956 repr, pp. 4-5.
165. *Ibid*, p. 5.
166. See besides Zeller, Grote, I, pp. 61-62 ; Grant, *Ethics*, I, pp. 17-18.
167. Joseph Zurcher, mentioned by Marjorie Grene, *op. cit.*, p. 28.



SHAKESPEARE AS TRANSLATED BY JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER

PRANAB GHOSH

Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), the awakener of Goethe, was a theologian, a philosopher, an aesthete, a poet and a most gifted writer. He was conversant with all that was present and past, could see what was coming. He was a critic of his own time. Herder, the Max Mueller of the 18th century, had a genius for languages, and it is this particular aspect of Herder which we are going to examine in connection with his translation of Shakespeare in German.

It will not be out of place to mention here the influence of English actors and pre-Shakespearean playwrights and also of Shakespeare on the development of the German stage. In Italy the mimic actors had preserved through centuries the heritage of old times as theme and play. Only the low taste had to be elevated again to the literary and dramatic art. This happened in the 16th century in the big cities. Here in the humanistic dramas the actors found a repertoire of literary importance and their improved performances found audience and understanding. Their fame extended far beyond Italy. The Italian actors were invited to Vienna by the Kaiser, to Paris by the French King. They also visited Spain and England.

This leading position of Italy was soon taken over by England with the emergence of the great dramatic talents like Marlowe, Kyd, and Shakespeare. Stages and dramas found support in the whole range of society, from the ordinary citizen to the nobility and court. To quote Prof. Otto Mann: "The men showed that the drama is not in the first place a literary educational speech, rather a dramatic—theatrical embodiment of unusual effect, that one could visit a theatre not on account of education and social representation, rather on account of charms and violent emotions emanating from it. The Englishmen attained in drama what the Italians did through the opera. They revivd in their own way the powers of action contained in the drama of old times. In drama and in dramatic art they pushed away the Italians from their leading position and took over around 1600 the leadership in Europe."

English troops now visited the continent. They played particularly in Germany since they had not had to compete there with their own

dramatic art. In addition to the Italians, the French men were also busy there, but more in the South and the West. In the North, people preferred the English art, to which one felt nearer through the spirit of Protestantism. The first English players on the continent played in Denmark in the Royal Court in 1579 and in 1585/86. On the invitation of the Duke Heinrich Julius Von Braunschweig another English troop visited in 1592. Play-writing and acting as professions were in England a practical business activity through which one tried to earn whatever is best possible. So the best troops remained in England; only the troops of second or still lower order went to foreign countries. They earned quite a good amount and returned being considerably rich. But gradually competition came in the field. With the victory of Puritanism in England and the suppression of theatre since 1642, the flow stopped, and those troops playing in Germany lost the chance of going back to their mother land. They were Germanised. Around 1660 there was no more any English troop in Germany.

The Englishmen gave with their drama also the English repertoire. However, the most modern pieces, the dramas of the blossoming period, remained as carefully guarded things only for the troops in England. With few exceptions, people played the pre-Shakespearean dramas of Peele, Greene, Marlowe, Kyd, but not their most mature works. In the first 30 years of the English play in Germany no works of Shakespeare, Massinger, Beaumont or Fletcher were performed. Upto 1626 only the early work of Shakespeare *Titus Andronicus* can be evidenced. In 1626 *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and *Julius Caesar* were played in Dresden.

Christopher Martin Wieland translated between 1762 and 1766 the works of Shakespeare, of which 22 were in prose and one was in verse. It is in this translation that Herder, Goethe and Schiller read the works of Shakespeare for the first time.

The National Theatre of Germany was founded in 1767 in Hamburg. Lessing was invited there as a dramaturgist. In the field of German drama Lessing wanted to do away with the prevailing French model and introduced Shakespearean one for the German stage. Although Lessing had directed the attention of the Germans to the English dramatic talent, it was the highly gifted sensibility of Herder that made them aware of the unique creative power and greatness of Shakespeare. In other words, we can designate Herder as one of the "discoverers" of Shakespeare in Germany. He highly acclaimed Shakespeare as a model to be followed in play-writing. Thus we find that there was a general enthusiasm for Shakespeare long before Herder was born.

I shall divide my paper in four parts and shall try to develop them one by one and, as far as possible, with illustration.

Firstly, what did Herder translate from Shakespeare ?

Secondly, why did he translate those pieces ?

Thirdly, how did he translate ? Did he have any norm or any theory of translation ?

Lastly, did he conform to that norm and achieve any measure of success ?

Herder's translation of Shakespeare appears in the third book of his monumental work on folk song—*Die Stimmen der Voelker in Liedern* (The voices of the peoples in songs). Those are mainly songs, eight in number, appearing in six of Shakespeare's plays. I am giving an account of them.

Cymbeline—Act II. Sc. 3. Lines 18-26.

Hark, hark ! the lark at heaven's gate sings...

Act IV. Sc. 2. Lines 258-281.

Fear no more the heat o' the sun.....

As You Like It—Act II. Sc. 5. Lines 1-8.

Under the greenwood tree.....

Act. II. Sc. 7. Lines 174-183.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind.....

Measure For Measure—

Act. IV. Sc. 1. Lines 1-6.

Take, oh take those lips away.....

Twelfth Night—Act I. Sc. 1. Lines 1-15.

If music be the food of love.....

Act II. Sc. 4. Lines 51-66.

Come away, come away death.....

Othello—Act. IV. Sc. 3. Lines 11-107.

(Talk between Desdemona and Emilia,)

Act. V. Sc. 2. Lines 1-22.

(Desdemona in bed asleep. Othello enters.)

Hamlet—Act IV. Sc. 5. Lines 1-200. (Ophelia's songs)

Herder could have tried his hands at other works of Shakespeare having a greater dramatic effect. But Shakespeare as a lyric poet appealed to his mind no less. Being considerably influenced by Percy's *Reliques* and Macpherson's *Ossian*, he started collecting folk songs of almost all the nations of Europe. The folk songs contained a special significance for him. He saw in them tone, word and dance united in one. They blossomed in the early ages with the unsophisticated people and bore for every nation a testimony to their own feelings, impulses and their ways of looking at things (*Weltanschauung*). In language,

tone and content they mirror the way of thinking of the race or nation. He pointed out the difference of folk-poetry and literary poetry. He counted the works of Homer, the Hebraic poesy of the Bible, Ossian and the works of Shakespeare under this folk-poetry, especially the folk songs which express the poetic genius of a nation. It was Herder who coined the term *Volkslied* (folk song). Literary poetry came at a much later date with the advance of civilization. Taken in this light no one can overlook the importance of the songs of Shakespeare selected by Herder for his book. This is but the obvious reason. There is another consideration which, to my mind, is deeper than the first one. The literary world of the 18th century with its thirst for knowledge was permeated with two ideas. Firstly, it was gradually felt that in the western world, particularly in Europe, there is practically no closed door literature. The European literature forms a unity, a completeness. Secondly, unity can only be illustrated through translations of significant authors for the wider public and for the specialists. In these endeavours of the age of Enlightenment lie the roots of the words like 'Progressive universal poesy', the term given by F. Schlegel, and 'World literature', termed by Goethe and Herder. Herein lies also the reason for undertaking translations of all literatures. Nurtured in the traditions of Enlightenment Herder satisfied the demands of his age and those of his own.

Moreover, the experts say that in the plays of Shakespeare there are many allusions to the words of songs and ballads older than Shakespeare's time, and for many of these the music is extant. It is also conjectured that he supplied words to music already existing. We may thus see that since most of the songs of Shakespeare contained an element of folk song, Herder found it proper to include them in his collection of folk songs.

We come to the third point. Did Herder have any theory of translation according to which he translated those songs? Yes, he had a theory. It is this: the simple and almost mechanical faithfulness to letters and to form means little to him. What is more important to him is the faithfulness to the spirit of the original. By this he understands the language as a carrier of the various expressions of this spirit. And it is also a matter of faithfulness to form, which, to him, in addition to numerical and metrical form, is also sound, melody, rhythm and tone and therefore, organic form. Not only philological knowledge added to the above is necessary for a translator, rather artistic gift and, still more, a creative genius equal to that of the original author are necessary.

Since the achievement of such a standard is fairly impossible, there remains for Herder the only way out in artistic-philological translation.

He expects that the translation work at least extends beyond 'attempts', 'occupies as it were the whole life of a scholar', is in no way 'beautified', and above all becomes like the original itself, from thought content and expression of imagery up to the external form of the foreign sound. With these claims he associates the pure philological remarks and elucidations, but not an uninteresting trifle and he does so 'in a high critical spirit'. It has been his purpose to put before the reader, to whom the world of the original is foreign from the point of view of time, the period, the atmosphere, the spirit, in short the historical situation of the original. In this he seems to have been influenced by the German translation of the Sanskrit drama *Sakuntala* by George Forster. It is in this respect that Forster's translation went a step further than that of Sir William Jones.

We come to the last point. Did he achieve any measure of success? The sound-system of the various languages of the world are very different from one another. Even if one does not know a language, one can feel the beauty of it from sound itself. The present writer does not know French. But he had the occasion to spend about ten hours in a train with French schoolboys travelling from Frankfurt to Paris. The sweetness of spoken French, i.e. the sound-system even in commonplace talks, impressed him so much that he felt that he should have also learnt French. Because German, as spoken by a man on the street, is not as soothing as French.

Here I shall dilate a little on the nature of the German language—its strength and weakness. Nothing is mentioned so often against the German language as its consonantal richness, above all the innumerable sibilants, i.e. hissing sounds, whose four, five or six appearances in a word often make it difficult even for a German to pronounce it easily. The sound-system in German is also different from that of English. Schw- and pf at the beginning and dt, zt and ntgt at the end of a word fall heavy on the ear. But the heaviness of the sound-system may be an advantage elsewhere. Then comes the inclination of the Germans towards long and interwoven sentences. English is certainly free from such difficulties. Even after all these objections German is admittedly a language for philosophy and poetic art.

Since in a German poem the word-position is almost in no way put to a pressure, it is very fit for reproducing foreign lyric. It is this very characteristic which again and again attract the Germans towards translation work. The number of synonym is so large that even in the case of complicated verse structure not only the original rhythm is maintained, but also the position of the significant words in verse can also be pre-

served. Then comes the use of adjectives with inflection. If one looks to the paradigm one will find that the majority of them end with a nasal sound, some end with the vowel 'e'. The careful use of adjectives will also produce a musical effect. Another strength of the German language lies in forming compound words which mean more than the sum of the individual words.

Let us see how far Herder was successful as an actual translator. One should read out the original and the translation so that one may judge the sound effect, i.e. the organic form.

Cymbeline—Act II. Sc. 3. Lines 18-26. An antechamber adjoining Imogen's apartments. Enter magicians,

Song

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With every thing that pretty is,
My lady sweet arise:
Arise, arise.

Translation.

Horch, horch die Lerch' an Himmelstor singt;
Die liebe Sonn' wacht auf!
Von allen Blumenkelchen trinkt
Sie schon ihr Opfer auf.
Das Hochzeitknoepfchen freundlich winkt
Und thut sein' Aeuglein auf;
Was hold und lieb ist, lieblich blinkt,
Auf, schoenes Kind, wach' auf!

I think Herder has been able to maintain the same meter and rhyme scheme, though the lines do not end up with the same sound as in English. The highest technical art is shown in the way great poets vary the music of their verse by varying the feet they employ. In this respect Herder consistently followed Shakespeare.

Let us see whether he could convey the spirit of the original song. For 'Phoebus' he takes 'Sonne'—the sun. Lines 20 and 21, i.e. 'His steeds to water at those springs/On chaliced flowers that lies'; have been translated thus: Von allen Blumenkelchen trinkt/sie schon ihr Opfer auf. A literal translation in English will be—from all calyxes it drinks up its offering. He is obviously not far from the sense 'the sun drinks up the

dew lying in cup-shaped flowers'. Herder has not unnecessarily beautified his translation, against which he himself has warned.

Herder has excelled in his translation of Othello. Desdemona sleeps. Othello enters the room. We hear an agonising heart speak. These lines can be taken as one of the best examples of a translation where the translator does not take any liberty whatsoever, be it in the selection of words or in conveying the spirit of the original. I quote a few lines from his translation.

Liedchen der Desdemona

Act V. Sc. 2 lines 1—15

Desdemona schlaeft. Othello mit Licht und Schwert.

Ja es verdient's es verdient's, mein' Seel' I

Lasst mich's nicht nennen euch, ihr keuchen Sterne,

Verdient's I—Doch will ich nicht ihr Blut vergiessen,

Nicht rissen diese Haut so weiss wie Schnee,

So sanft wie'n Alabasterbild im Grabmal.

(Er legt das Schwert nieder)

Nur sterben muss sie, sonst betruet sie mehr I

Thu aus das Licht I und dann—dann ? aus das Licht I

Loesch' ich dich aus, dienstbare Flamme, dir

Kann ich dein erstes Licht wohl wiedergeben,

Falla es mich reute. Aber dir I—Einmal

Dein Licht dir ausgethan, du kuenstlichste

Gestalt der Meisterin Natur, so weiss ich

Nicht, wo Prometheus Feuer ist, das dir

Dein Licht anzuende wieder—

(Er setzt das Licht nieder)

Hab' ich sie abgepfloeckt die Rose, ich

Kann ihr nie Wuchs des Lebens wiedergeben.

Sie muss verwelken. Nun so will ich dich

Noch kosten auf dem Zweige. (Er kuesst sie.)

Herder always added footnotes to his translations in order to provide his readers with the atmosphere of the original. But in the case of Shakespeare's translation he, rightly enough, did not forget to add one thing. He adds that Shakespeare's songs are untranslatable.

I am also inclined to support the view. They are something more than mere 'attempts'. Herder has been quite successful in conveying the spirit of the original. The adept combination of vowels and consonants in words, the careful use of adjectives, predicatively and attributively, and maintaining the same meter and rhyme scheme of the original, i. e. the organic form, helped him considerably in bringing out the spirit of

the original. Even after all these the easy flow of Shakespeare's songs seems to be lacking in his translations. But Herder could not help. A translator is naturally limited to a narrow selection of words, if he is not to tamper with the original. No translation has been a work satisfactory in all respects. That is the reason why Hamlet has been translated more than 35 times in German and Goethe's Faust is still being translated in English. The great achievement of Herder, to my mind, lay in influencing the writers of the younger generation, especially Tieck and Schlegel, to take up the job of translating Shakespeare's works—still considered as standard ones in form and content. They form even to-day a repertoire for the German stage.



THE NATURALISTIC STAGE

N. K. BANERJEE

In the light of the increasing interest manifested in the conditions of production of Greek and Elizabethan Drama in this age, the importance of the contemporary stage for naturalistic drama will be readily admitted. What was demanded of such a stage as a place, physical, concrete, visible with settings, furniture and other accessories, with actors and their acting, lighting, costume, in fact with everything that works upon the senses, and what it had to give, are relevant for the assessment of naturalistic drama. Useful and illuminating as such knowledge of the inter-relation of stage and drama of any period, it is even more important for plays in which environment in the shape of material conditions has such an intimate bearing. Emile Zola has perhaps this in mind when he says, "since the theatre is a material reproduction of life, external surroundings have always been a necessity there," Aristotle too, though taking a somewhat restricted view had conceded that, "As they act the stories it follows that in the first place the Spectacle (or stage-appearance of the actors) must be some part of the whole."

A remarkable feature of the plays of the period is the wealth of information provided by the dramatists themselves as to the sensory effects they wish to produce by means of the resources of the contemporary stage, a fact which is patent from the explicit direction as to place, property, persons and time, and in which it is only rivalled by the descriptive urge in the novels of the day. The stage-directions of not only Pinero, Shaw and Barker but of such younger men as Harkin, Houghton and Elizabeth Baker are copious, precise, minute and thorough. However long, their worth has to be determined from their contribution to the dramatic effect of the plays in which they occur.

The mention or description of place in the stage-direction throws characters into some sort of spatial relation with the environment and it is worth examining if this has any dramatic significance. The stage direction of *Mary Broome* by Alan Monkhouse in Act I reads: "The drawing-room in a biggish suburban villa..." The scenes for Acts II & III remain the same, while that for Act IV is 'Rather poor lodgings.' This is not much more communicative than that of a Restoration comedy like *The Man of Mode* by Etherege whose four Acts are

placed respectively in a Dressing-room, Lady Townley's house, Lady Woodvil's lodgings and Lady Townley's Drawing-room. Yet the term 'suburban villa' at once projects the scene in time and social hierarchy. In Etherege's play, the dressing room is indeterminate and though the Title 'Lady' indicates social rank, its proper position in the gentlemanly class is not clear. The word 'lodgings' used by Monkhouse has a distinctly lower middle-class connotation which it certainly does not have in the other play. In view of the increasing practice of using interior scenes (though by no means absent in earlier drama) and of specifying them more and more particularly, its implication for the stage and drama requires further examination. Consider, for instance, such statements in the stage-directions of a few plays of the day :

"Great George Street, Westminster, is the address of Doyle and Broadbent, civil engineers. On the threshold one reads that the firm consists of Mr. Laurence Doyle and Mr. Thomas Broadbent, and that their rooms are on the first floor."

"The scene is triangular, representing a corner of the living room kitchen of no. 137, Burnley Road, Hindle, a house rented at about 7s. 6d. a week."

"Sitting-room at 55, Acacia Avenue."

In the three extracts above, the playwrights visualise their characters and have the stage confirm the impression in a way which makes the address important for the play's effect. Obviously intended for possible readers and producers, the information is not directly brought out on the stage nor elicited through dialogue. Yet the deliberate link-up of a locality, a street, the number of the house or the rental with the scene actually represented—an Office-room, a Kitchen or a Sitting room indicates, that those factors as part of a wider environment are thought to be as much a part of the condition of existence as the immediate surroundings. The address in the first of the extracts is of a firm of Civil Engineers and in a respectable locality. The detailed description of the reception-room which follows this extract relates the fixtures to the professional interest and standing of the owners. The total effect sought is one of 'bachelor untidiness and indifference, not want of means, for nothing that Doyle and Broadbent themselves have purchased is cheap ; nor is anything they want lacking.' Within the play itself, there are incidental allusions to their profession and to their prosperity, enough to corroborate the evidence of the eyes. In the other extracts, the mention of the house number makes the scene particular, individual, unique. The number is a way of indicating that just as it confers singularity and identity upon a house, so does it distinguish the people and their experience from

others. The directions following the last two differ from that of the first in seeking the illusion of a unique response, while Shaw is content with the typical features—professional stamp, bachelor impress and such like traits, for all his minute. To the distinction between the two, a Stage-direction of Barrie is particularly relevant :

“The scene is any Lawyer’s Office. It may be, and no doubt will be, the minute representation of some actual office, with all the characteristic appurtenances thereof, every blot of ink in its proper place ; but for the purpose in hand any bare room would do just as well.”

For Barrie’s purposes *any* Lawyer’s Office would do ; perhaps not even that, for he ends up by saying that ‘*any bare room*’ would serve as well. Yet, as a practising playwright he is aware that on the stage when the scene is represented, it would be modelled on the actual belongings of a Lawyer’s Office in real life. But so far as he is concerned it is immaterial. Evidently, he is unimpressed by such a meticulous duplication of actual things, and is dubious of ‘every blot of ink.’ The same supercilious disregard of ‘appurtenances thereof’ is apparent in *The Twelve Pound Look*. There, having decided that Harry Sims is ‘YOU’. (Barrie, J.N., *The Twelve Pound Look* : p. 763). He declares that the scene is laid in ‘your house’. He is prepared to redecorate the room rather than let the ‘you’ off on ‘a mere matter of plush and dadoes’. Even so, the admission that re-decoration to befit different persons and tastes implies acceptance of an inter-relation between persons and their surroundings. Nevertheless, Barrie’s assumption that whether he asked for it or not, the scene would be given the look of some actual Lawyer’s Office, indicates a resigned submission to a practice and mode of production current at the time to which he is neither opposed nor wedded. Indeed, in his very last play he makes a statement which throws further light on his attitude. He says :

‘All this calls for adroitness from stage experts that is beyond the author’s skill, who knows what he wants but not how to get it and has now given them enough to ponder :’

From the above it is to be seen that Barrie is inclined to think of and plan the background of his dramatic personae in terms of the stage. The demands that he is at times disposed to make upon the ‘stage experts’ such as, flying children, vanishing ladies, lagoons, islands, etc. among a variety of spectacular scenic effects, are indeed such as to require a great deal of skill and resourcefulness. It is a feat quite capable of drawing attention to itself by its very ‘adroitness’. A faithful reproduction of appearance of a room in actual life, be it a Lawyer’s Office, the

Drawing room of a successful businessman, or of an M.P., surely is not beyond the resources of such stage experts. This reluctance to exploit the stage effect of actual life scene in one, points unmistakeably to the acceptance of a frankly spectacular interest in the matter of stage production. Such an assumption is further substantiated by his enthusiasm and verve for any interior which promises to be interesting to the sight such as the drawing room at Laon House in Admiral Crichton or even humbler interiors such as the Shand sitting room (in what Every Woman Knows), or Phoebe's Blue room (in Quality Street), Barrie's practice and attitude to stage production provide an extreme instance of a predominantly picturesque interest in scenic display, exteriors or interiors and assign reciprocity between character and environment a minor place. Since the capacity for display is an entirely extrinsic factor, its bearing on the dramatic effect of any play cannot be regarded as organic.

Unlike Barrie the stage directions of Pinero, Shaw and Barker lay down the specifications with exactness, and emphasis with no such marks of deference and diffidence towards 'stage experts' reflecting an altered view in the matter of those details of items so lightly disposed of by Barrie and of which the particularization of the address mentioned above is a symptom. The resources of the late Nineteenth Century Theatre in point of stage architecture and decor far beyond what drama of earlier periods could or did draw upon, are directed to ends which render the specification significant. Without altogether neglecting the appeal of diversification and massive build-up of scenes as any of the scenes from *His House In Order* of Pinero or Major Barbara of Shaw would bear out, the point lent to many of them by certain comments is of special interest. Consider the following statement which rounds off Pinero's direction for 'a library in a country mansion' in the play mentioned above :

"But, though there is evidence that the room is in use, everything appears to be strictly in its place."

The dramatist, it is to be inferred, not content only with the effect of respectable prosperity which such a scene would project, wants it to convey an orderliness and propriety which is to be gathered from its very appearance. Interesting as such a demand upon a scene, the importance of the impression is realised when in the course of the scene Filmer Jesson says :

"When I ask that my house shall be in order, I am asking, not only that my luncheon, my dinner, shall be decently and punctually served ; not only that this inkstand, this paper, knife, may be found invariably in the same place, but that every

wheel of the mechanism of my private affairs, however, minute, shall be duly oiled and preserved from grit."

From Filmer Jesson's remarks it is clear that Pinero has sought to draw attention to his passion for order objectively by means of visual effect of order and neatness. Considering how compelling this 'Order' is for this play, Pinero's desire to lend it visual corroboration not merely to the opening scene but even the drawing room whose far apart walls are parallel, whose chairs are 'stiff-looking' and which are placed at 'regular' intervals and in which even the Newspapers lie 'neatly folded and arranged', takes the stage beyond merely the decorative phase. The same attitude to staging leads him in *The Thunderbolt* to demand such effects as,

"The architecture, decorations and furniture are pseudoartistic and vulgar. The whole suggests the home of a common person of moderate means who has built himself a 'fine house'."

Or again, such an effect as,

"The room and everything in the room are eloquent of narrow means if not of actual poverty. But the way in which the arrangement about the room, give evidence of taste and refinement."

The requirement put forth in such statements reflects the use of the available resources of the stage to convey visible evidence of the culture and quality of the people who live in such surroundings. Indeed, how often such a connection is made and developed in various ways constitute an approach of outstanding interest for the plays of other dramatists. Thus, Bernard Shaw, speaking of Roebuck Ramsden's study in *Man and Superman*, declares at the outset :

"The study, handsomely and solidly furnished, proclaims the man of means."

Characterising the play as a 'drama of ideas', he proceeds to give a graphic representation of the intellectual interests of Ramsden by means of busts, photographs and prints which reflect his taste and ideas. Not only are such objects in addition to the furniture and drapings, their use by Shaw is symptomatic of the increasing importance attached to a detailed rendering of material conditions. Maugham is among those who has utilised the existing theatre to extract special visual effects for dramatic purposes. Consider the opening direction to *The Circle* :

"The scene is a stately drawing room at Aston Adey, with fine pictures on the walls and Georgian Furniture. Aston Adey has been described, with many illustrations in *Country Life*. It is not a house, but a palace. Its owner takes a great pride in it, and there is nothing in the room which is not of the period.

Without going into the details of the scene as Plnero and Shaw Love to do, Maugham is content to leave them, as Barrie would have done in resignation, to stage experts. He has not, however, thereby either ignored the importance of the scenic effect or conceded its designing to them. For all his brevity he has made an exacting demand by asking for 'Georgian' furniture and in further requiring that it should have nothing 'which is not of the period'. He has also drawn attention to the status of the building by characterising it as a 'palace' and not just a 'house' whose prestige is vindicated by its picture in a periodical of some local consequence. In the play the interesting diversion upon the 'Sheraton' chair refers the mind back to the style of the surrounding furniture. The tremendous significance of the scenic effect is brought home even more powerfully when it is seen how the style of the furniture and the prestige of the place induce in Arnold Champion-Cheney a frame of mind which becomes an important ingredient of the drama.

Yet another Maugham stage direction, that of *Our Betters*, reveals how, without inhibiting the delights of the spectacular and the decorative, the stage is being made to heighten the dramatic impact of the play. It reads :

"The Drawing room at Lady Grayston's house in Grosvenor Street, Mayfair. It is a sumptuous double room, of the period of George II, decorated in green and gold, with coromandel screen and lacquer cabinets ; but the coverings of the chairs, the sofas and cushions show the influence of Bakst and the Russian Ballet ; they offer an agreeable mixture of rich plum, emerald greens, canary and ultramarines. On the floor is a Chinese Carpet, and here and there are pieces of Ming pottery.

In contrast to the almost ascetic purity of the late XVIII Century architecture and furniture of the former scene from the address in Mayfair, the expansiveness of the room, the gay and playful colourfulness of the furnishing, to the oriental riches of carpet and pottery, the place exudes luxuriance. The over all effect of the scene is of a basic simplicity of design being superimposed and swamped by diffused lights and soft outlines. The details, with no pretence to exhaustiveness or unnecessary diffidence, are so chosen as to serve as a source of enlightenment to the rank, wealth, taste and even character of frequenters of the scene. Taken together, these features build up a scene charged with a sinister atmosphere as a result of the association of people of a certain kind. Maugham in providing a corroboration of the fact makes one character, a comparative outsider, Fleming exclaim :

"There's something in these surroundings which makes me terribly uncomfortable. Under the brilliant surface I suspect all kinds of ugly and shameful secrets that everyone knows and pretends not to."

The speaker is aware of the presence of a 'something' in the very 'surroundings' which makes him feel uneasy. The obvious circumstances of life in this set, which go to build up the public image of this society, the 'surface' is fascinating by virtue of their brilliance. That 'something' is the atmosphere which envelops and permeates these people. The physical sensations of colour—'emerald greens, canary and ultramarines', and of touch the inviting and yielding softness of cushions, sofas and carpets, combine to produce a psychological image of rank, prurient life. It is evident from Maugham's approach to the contemporary stage that even while making his submission to the theatre of spectacle like his forbears, his sensory and psychological link-up of spectacle and drama in his plays constitutes yet another mode of presenting upon the stage the naturalistic causality between character and environment.

The stage of Granville Barker demands careful consideration because it embodies the concept of staging of one actively associated with production of contemporary plays. The following extracts from his stage-direction in *The Voysey Inheritance* provide interesting clues :

"The Voysey dining room at Chiselhurst, when children and grand-children are visiting is dining-table and very little else. And at this moment in the evening when five or six men are sprawling in their chairs, and the air is clouded with smoke, it is a very typical specimen of the middle class English Temple."

"The dining room looks very different now in the white light of a July noon. Moreover on this particular day, it is not even its normal self. There is a peculiar luncheon spread on the table...Such preparations denote one of the recognised English festivities, and the appearance of Phoebe, the maid, who has just completed them, the set solemnity of her face and the added touches of black to her dress and cap suggest that this is probably a funeral."

"Naturally it is the dining-room consecrated as it is to the distinguishing orgy of the season—which bears the brunt of what an English household knows as Christmas decoration—Otherwise the only difference between the dining room's appearance at half past nine on Christmas Eve and on any other evening in the year is that little piles of envelope seem to be lying about while there is a lot of tissue paper and string to be seen peeping from odd corners."

In this five-act play three of the five scenes are laid in the Voysey Dining Room. But the effect, far from monotonous and static, is one of variety and movement. In the first, the dining room is shown as on normal days, in the second, under the shadow of mourning and in the third, on a festive occasion. Such comments in each of the scenes are backed up by details which like the red wall-papering, the 'grained oak' wood work, the black marble fireplace in the first, the table cover, the unusual lunch menu, above all—the comparative bareness and tidiness of the room of the second and obtrusive presence of holly and mistletoe in the third, contribute to the distinctive atmosphere such as adorn and dignify a hundred middle class Englishmen of that class on different occasions. The very appearance of the place lives up to and confirms the expectations of the mahogany furniture are the visible tokens of riches and respectability which inspire confidence. Since the 'reputation for wealth' as old Voysey says, is what counts in their world and its various manifestations surround those who live in their midst from childhood onwards, willing submission to whatever demands the conditions make becomes, as in Major Booth Voysey, habitual and spontaneous. The visible changes, chiefly, marks of austerity on the occasion of Christmas in the room which is substantially the same, illustrate, in the context of the exposure of the subject of the mourning and of the denial of obligations of riches, respectability and confidence by Edward Voysey, the hold of conventionality over the outward circumstances. Indeed, how powerful a hold these have is voiced by Hugh Voysey :

"Well, what have I really learnt...about myself

That's the only learning...that there's nothing

I can do or be but reflects our drawing room at Chiselhurst."

The point of Hugh's grievance is that though he is an artist and a bohemian, he has not escaped the mental climate of the 'drawing-room at Chiselhurst.' He could just as well have said, the dining room, for his animus is against the pervasive English Home. It is in view of the vital significance of home, Barker's insistence on the details of the 'typical specimen of the middle class English Temple' on the stage has to be understood. The use of the stage for the visual representation of the pressure of environment upon is made by Barker even more explicitly in *Madras House*. Philip Madras therein says :

"Persian carpet on the floor, Last supper by Chirlandago over the mantelpiece. The sofa you're sitting on was made in a forgotten France. This is a museum. And down at the precious school what are they cultivating Mildred's mind into but another museum of good manners and good taste and..."

The actor playing the role of Philip draws attention to objects actually shown on the stage—a carpet, a painting, a sofa. The remarks moreover indicate the highly artistic quality of the objects. The total effect of the place, according to the speaker is that of a 'museum'. It amounts to saying that their presence in the room is of as little consequence vitally as objects of art in a museum, or even that since a museum is a collection of things which have long ceased to influence conduct in actual life, so have the things in the room lost their dynamic character. The speaker's fear of Mildred's mind becoming just such another museum piece, of good manners and good taste indicates the deadening effect of the environment. One purpose that Barker has made Philip's analysis serve is to justify the use of visual aids on the stage. In so far as some scenic features are made to convey a visible reminder of the fact that objective surroundings can and do mould outlook, behaviour or character more explicitly in Barker's plays than is that of dramatists who had gone before him, the naturalistic stage of the day receives from his plays the most skilful support.

If in the staging of the plays of this time, there is, in the dramatists so far considered, no disinclination to take advantage of the candidly spectacular effects, more markedly in Barrie (as in his *Peter Pan*, *The Admirable*, *Chrichton*, *Mary Rose*, etc.) a little less so in Shaw (as in the Hell scene of *Man and Superman*, the Bishop's Norman kitchen in *Getting Married*, etc.) and in a disguised form in Pinero and Maugham in their decorative aristocratic interiors. Ever since a taste for massive and gradiose interiors has superseded that for the merely sensational or the picturesque, their approximation to or fancied resemblance with scenes in actual life has partly been the object of spectacular pleasure. It is such a partiality for real life effects which Barrie deprecated (in his stage direction to *The Will* quoted above) but acquiesced to out of consideration for a public demand reflected by a dominating style of stage production. Though spectacular interiors, whether stipulated at length or briefly sketched, continue to be exploited in Pinero's and Maugham's high society dramas, increasingly they give way to such less pleasant interiors such as the tasteless dining room of the Mortimores in Pinero's *The Thunderbolt* or the Wilson sitting room in *Chains*, or Taylor's bare shanty in Maugham's *The Land of Promise*, and justify their representation on grounds far less naive than the delight in the novelty of real doors with real knobs, real grass and real cows and horses upon the stage.⁸ Whatever ground for regarding novelty, a recognised stage contrivance for abnormal excitation of the senses, as a legitimate ingredient of dramatic effect there might be behind plays with

an obvious spectacular appeal, re-construction upon the stage of visual effects of daily familiarity, incidentally a no less shrewd piece of novelty by itself, nevertheless arouses associations implicit in the intermediary objects. The naturalistic stage, in the hands of Maugham, Barker and Galsworthy, shows itself capable of harnessing the undeniable appeal of the spectacular in the theatre in such a way as to load the stage picture with the weight and authentic stamp of environment in which the characters of the playwrights, habitually move about.

The stage, which the plays of Galsworthy and such younger men as St. John Hankin and playwrights of the Repertory theatre envisage, indicates both the direction and the degree of progress towards a naturalistic concept of staging. If there is in their directions less of the zest of Shaw and Pinero for detailed scene plotting as to the disposition of doors, windows, chairs, furniture, accessories, even to the movement of the persons on the stage, it is because both the skill and the inclination for exact representation, present in the theatre ever since Robertson's days permitted dramatists to interpret given data in a dramatically significant way. The stage picture for instance in Act II of Galsworthy's *The Silver Box* is constructed not simply with an eye to appropriateness of the scene or to the status and circumstances of characters but as a rendering of the very characteristic environment of the kind of people the Joneses are. The stage direction reads :

"The Jones' lodgings, Merthyr Street, at half past two o'clock. The bare room, with tattered oilcloth and damp, distempered walls, has an air of tidy wretchedness."

From the unpapered and un-adorned walls, the tattered oilcloth and bleak poverty-stricken appearance of the place, the picture is of a lodging-house room such as might be seen in a poor locality like Merthyr Street. The term 'lodgings' to describe the Jones' dwelling because of its generally accepted meaning, relieves Galsworthy of the necessity of entering into all but a few striking features of the normal environment of numerous families in straitened circumstances. But in asking that it should also convey 'an air of tidy wretchedness', Galsworthy seeks an effect which reflects a serious, vital and intensely individual response of the Joneses to their environment. Sometimes this close correspondence between scene and character is not left to the discretion of the producer but indicated by a few characteristic touches such as the 'meagre fire', the bare furnishing, bricked floor, the very austere food, in *Strife*, all of which go to make the environment appropriate to Roberts and his wife at a particular time.

Among the younger playwrights of the time, the scene setting,

whether described at length or merely outlined, is not particularly remarkable for architectural and technical virtuosity; rather, this aspect of the stage pictures is overlaid with considerations arising out of and indeed, implicit in its details. Glimpsed at fitfully and superficially by Shaw, exploited with an eye for theatrical effect more forcefully by Pinero and Maugham, it is Barker and Galsworthy who effected the change from the static concept of stage architecture to the dynamic one of environment from their manner of handling of detail. St. John Hankin and Stanley Houghton are elaborate in their demand upon the stage but the details build up a general effect which is unique to their particular set-up. Thus Hankin mentions numerous items of furniture and etc. in the Jackson drawing room so as to produce a total effect of over-crowding, of being 'Too full of everything', a feature which betokens 'opulence rather than taste'. He has pots of plants in flower distributed all over the room, on the Piano, in the fire-place with the object of indicating 'the Jackson's conception of the proper way to adorn a fire-place and a suitable place for growing plants'. Together with other items they contribute to an effect of a room which is 'Not vulgar, but not distinguished'.⁸ For the business of the play, the room is the replica of the environment which engenders tension and conflict. In like manner the Breakfast room in Houghton's *Hindle Wakes* might be an extension of the personality of Nat Jefferies by means of its fixtures and furnishings. It is a room which is 'intended to be lived in'; 'comfort and homeliness' are what it is made to yield by the owner.

The younger playwrights, either on account of the level of people they depict or out of practical considerations of the resources of the little theatres, confine themselves to one or two scenes. Githa Sowerby's *Rutherford and Son* has only one scene—the living room, for the whole play. The choice of this room for the setting is grounded in the consideration that in it 'the family life has centred for generations'. In view of its importance as the intimate environment of 'generations', the details selected for mention have significance. It has red papering and solid Mahogany furniture which contribute to its over-all atmosphere, in which other items such as the big table in the middle with a brown cloth cover, the polished sideboard overhung with a portrait, a desk with a brass inkstand, a marble clock on the mantle, etc. in their 'appointed places lend an air of 'orderliness' and a particularity that sets the room apart from other interiors causing people in it to re-act in ways different from all others. That is to say, the room clearly projects the environment peculiar to the Rutherford household. In a like manner the Wilson sitting room, in Elizabeth Barker's *Chains* cluttered and crowded with

such articles as wicker arm-chairs, folding carpet chairs, bent wood chairs, mahogany sideboard, a dinner-table, a sewing machine, carpet square over oil-cloth; besides numerous photographs adorning the walls not only testify to cramped living condition of people of a certain class but also creates an environment in some degree peculiar to the Wilsons. A like stress on the distinctive in atmosphere and setting is laid by others, sparing of details by a few expressive epithets in their direction. Consider, for instance, the following in Ervine's *Jane Clegg* :

"The room has a cosy air, although it is furnished in the undistinguished manner characteristic of the homes of lower-middle class people."

In the statement above, the identification of the scene with the homes of lower middle class people is a mode of conferring social, economic and cultural dimensions to it, while the effect sought through the term, 'cosy air' would require it to distinguish itself from other such homes on that count.

In the foregoing analysis of the stage picture as envisaged by dramatist belonging to different generations but writing for the stage of the day, a specific and more or less detailed demand of requirements by most of the playwrights has been shown to stand in marked contrast to the brief and perfunctory directions of plays of earlier periods. The enormously increased and still increasing resources of the theatre of the times for spectacular display and for exact and accurate representation have been advanced as the incentive for such demands. It has been further pointed out that the growing partiality for interiors—at first of the massive, gorgeous and elaborate kind had been extended to far less picturesque interiors. From the plays of such dramatists as Maugham, Barker, Galsworthy and a host of younger playwrights, even those of Shaw and Barrie it has been demonstrated how the naturalistic outlook, freely making use of the formidable resources of the theatre, gradually came to permeate the stage. Beginning with the simple atmospheric value of scenery to show correlation between scene and character, in the plays of the naturalistic dramatists it became the objective equivalent of environment. The projection, upon the stage, of visual effects which stimulate immediate recognition and familiar associations, has been the means, increasingly, of equating the stage picture with environment. From the exact nature of specifying requirements and a growing tendency of taking for granted the social, economic and cultural values of representations by the more important playwrights of the period, it is demonstrated that material conditions reproduced on the stage bear the same relation to characters in drama as they do in life. The practice,

which calls forth such a view of the function of the stage makes a significant extension of and exploration into the scope of Spectacle in drama by its integration within a dramatic event in consonance with the naturalistic thesis of mutuality between character and environment.

II

Lighting

A very powerful kind of stage effect had virtually remained unattainable until the arrival of electricity for, the one which used the flickering, uncertain rush light, nor the even glare of lime light could conceive the practicability of control and variation of lighting. From the point of view of the stage the plays of Shakespeare alone held immense possibilities of lighting in such plays as *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Midsummer Night's Dream* among others. From the point of view of the dramatists, Shakespeare or others, dramatically necessary or otherwise, the mention of the hour of the day or night was for only mental note. Control over lighting effects has not only realised the possibilities and even surpassed fondest expectations but has opened up a new line of enquiry as to the effect of lighting on the psychology of men, individually or collectively. Even more necessary is it to enquire how far, subduing its innate spectacularism, it subserves the dramatist's purpose in the theatre. The question, and even more, its answer is important for its bearing on Indian conditions, judging, by its disturbing and distracting power still in such effects as the illusion of a woman run over by a Locomotive in a play called *Setu* (The Bridge), and of a mine flooded with water in *Panchatapa* all with the jugglery of light by a young Indian Technician, Tapas Sen.¹⁰

The opening of Galsworthy's *The Silver Box* is anything but exciting from the point of view of lighting. The stage direction reads :

"The curtain rises on the Barthwicks' dining-room, large, modern, and well-furnished ; the window curtains drawn. Electric light is burning...It is past midnight."

Electric lighting had been in use on the stage since the eighties and so Galsworthy could not have drawn attention to it as a piece of novelty. It is likely that it still enjoyed something like a status symbol ; in the absence of any specification, it is unfair to suppose that it must have been the only light. The emptiness of the stage on the rise of the curtain, the arrangement with due prominence to certain articles—a tray with whiskey, syphon and silver box and the light presumably coming from a single source, produce the effect of midnight which is what the

dramatist wants. Such an effect, of being the property of prosperous people, of being at the moment deserted, of the late hour, of investing the room with a 'character', is implicit in a modest demand from lighting.

Modest as such use of lighting is, it is made to serve a specific dramatic purpose. Such is not the use to which specific mention of time of a scene is put by Jones in *The Lie* where he states explicitly that it is four o'clock in the afternoon or by Shaw when he, in *John Bull's Other Island*, makes a point of announcing the time of a visitor's arrival (I-P : 405) for nothing is made of it in the play's business whereas the milieu, the moment and his own beatific state inspire Barthwick to an outburst of hospitality to the casually picked up Jones.

The fact that nearly every act and scene of almost any play of the period makes a point of indicating the approximate time of day must be taken to mean that the playwrights have the lighting requirements in performance in mind. The setting of most plays of the period are interiors requiring different kinds of lighting for day and for night. Barrie and sometimes Shaw make exacting and intricate demands from lighting in their out-of-doors scenes. The fulfilment of the conditions enhances the spectacular effects of such scenes as of the Garden in Act I of *Dear Brutus*, the island in Act II of *Admirable Chrichton*, the Hell scene of *Man and Superman*, the stage directions to which by themselves are fascinating.

From the point of view of drama, however, the naturalistic lighting requirement should be examined in the context of dramatic action, dialogue and other conditions. The *Voysey Inheritance* is a remarkable play from the point of view of lighting for there are only two sets : the Voysey Office at Lincoln's Inn and the dining room at Cheselhurst. On the surface the lighting requirement of the Office is very modest and insignificant :

"Mr. Voysey's own room, into which he walks about twenty past ten of a morning radiates enterprise."

The same scene in the Fourth Act, without Mr. Voysey, is described thus :

"Mr. Voysey's room at the Office is Edward's now. It has somehow lost that brilliancy which the old man's occupation seemed to give it."

The same room figures in both the scenes and at the same time of the day. Barker, however, would have it that without any substantial change, the room which once radiated 'enterprise' has 'somehow lost its brilliancy'. In other words, the specific quality of the environment has changed. It is obvious that with identical lighting, it would not be possible to obtain the different effects, more so as no substantial

change in the appearance is to be made. It is, therefore, only lighting which can indicate the subtle change that has come about. The point to note is that lighting effect is being employed for no spectacular effect. The lighting is to be of a kind to bring out fully the distinctive traits of the room under the occupations of two persons of utterly different characters. Lighting, thus, is capable of projecting changes of environment.

In like manner, the dining room, under different conditions makes different demands from lighting :

Act II : "It is a very typical specimen of the middle class English domestic temple..."

Act III : "The dining room looks very different in the white light of a July noon. Moreover, on this particular day, it isn't even its normal self..."

In the first, the time is after dinner and in the second, noon, under the shadow of Mr. Voysey's funeral. In the first Edward Voysey is the only one who does not fall into the spell of a family gathering, the atmosphere of which is present in the dining room. The kind of light which plays upon the furniture confidence and intimacy. In the other, in the glaring light of day, the room presents a cold and formal look as befitting a solemn occasion. Suitable lighting, therefore, is of very great necessity to produce two totally different effects in the room which remains substantially the same. Here again is a demand for lighting to produce the impression of altering conditions.

The most outstanding example of naturalistic employment of light effect is seen in *Justice*. The scene is Falder's cell. Being entirely in pantomime the full impact of representation is powerfully conveyed. The source of natural light is a window :

"The barred window with a ventilator is high up in the Middle of the end wall."

"Low down in the corner by the door is a thick glass screen about a foot square, covering the gas jet let into the wall."

The scene opens in 'fast fading daylight'. Falder betrays unmistakably symptoms of extreme nervous tension, all his movements reveal very imperfect control over his bodily powers. During the course of the scene the light begins to fail badly. At one stage, 'it has grown nearly dark'. As he stands, half paralysed on the fall of the tin can from his hand, staring at the stuff of his shirt he looks as if he is 'seeing things'. The stage direction then reads :

"There is a short tap and click ; the cell light behind the glass screen has been turned up. The cell is brightly lighted."

In the Scene, the semi-darkness is the first of the lighting effect asked for. Even this little is dimmed during the course of the scene, until it is almost dark. But almost immediately the darkness is dispelled by the light from the gas-jet. The gas-jet is significant. Though electricity had arrived, prisons till then could not be expected to receive its benefit. But more important is the synchronisation of lighting with the course of Falder's failing self-control. In the light of day mental discipline imposes some sort of restriction upon his movements. The growing darkness fast removes the control of conscious intellect. The fall of the tin-can and the sound it produces is the breaking point. The brilliant light from the gas-jet then reveals the disintegration of sanity. The use of light in the scene is not symbolical because the variations in lighting do not *stand* for the changes which occur in Falder's mind but such as reveal them. The light is a sense-perception which enters into Falder's consciousness and physically affects his motor behaviour. In this one scene Galsworthy has put to psychological uses the newest yet stage-effect to delineate the very process of the loss of mental balance.

Even in plays where lighting is not required to fulfil such a specialised function, its effect in naturalistic plays is utilised for the purpose of establishing a close connection between scene and character. Consider the prominent lighting effect of the act of *Jane Clegg* :

"It is almost nine o'clock, and, as the evening is chilly a bright fire burns in the grate."

No other light is mentioned though the fire light may not be the source of lighting of the scene. Particular mention of it is, therefore, to emphasise its importance to the scene. Taken in conjunction with other details its significance is unmistakable. The room has a cosy air although it is furnished in the taste (or lack of it) of lower middle class people. The special effect of domesticity sought is enhanced by another detail :

"Johnny and Jenny, aged ten and eight years respectively are playing on the rug in front of the fire."

As the most immediately arresting object for the sight on the stage, the fire with its flickering light makes a deep impression. Old Mrs. Clegg warms herself by its side and the children play on the rug itself as Jane sits knitting and talking near it. The fire exudes warmth and radiates light and the indefinable placidity of the home. To how delicate a use lighting effect has been put can be appreciated when it is remembered that the play's action is concerned with the almost heroic fight of Jane to preserve the home for the sake of the children and how the action of the play ironically contrasts and belies this picture of domestic bliss.

From the naturalistic handling of stage lighting as analysed above it

can be readily seen that far from using it to produce pyrotechnic effects well within its skill, naturalistic drama is content to utilise it for legitimate dramatic purposes of rendering environment vivid and revealing depths of character. If it has not fully exploited its hitherto unexplored psychological possibilities, it has not encouraged those marvellous effects, pointed out and which within a few years was to be completely revolutionised and made more marvellous.

III

Costume

On the stage, among other visual effects what the actors wear is significant. Costume is the simplest visual stage device to establish the identity, the social standing, the age or period and even outlook on life. Costume effects of some kinds are now well recognised. The heavily stylised and conventionalised Greek costume, with its mask and elaborate head-dress long and flowing robes and cothurnus from which a voice and a presence was all that was asked for of the stage, is one such; the presentation of historical or legendary characters in the garb often gorgeous and costly (as the Elizabethan presentation of Greek, Roman or Historical plays) of the day, as of similar experiments of a latter day is another, a close fidelity to character and times with minute touches of verisimilitude constitutes a third. Of these the last establishes such an immediate correlation between dress and character that its implication for naturalism is worth examining.

In *Man and Superman* Shaw describes Ramsden's clothes with meticulous care thus :

"He wears a black frock, coat, a white waist coat (it is bright spring weather), and trousers, neither

black nor perceptibly blue, one of those indefinitely mixed hues which the modern clothier has produced to harmonise with the religion of respectable men."

The clothes thus described are such as are commonly worn by English gentlemen of a certain age, social standing and of a certain period. He takes pains to stress the extremely formal correctness down to the white waist coat (although 'it is bright spring weather'.) He also draws attention to the conventionality of the colour of the trousers. The effect that Shaw is intent on producing is the utter conventionality of the man so much so that he may be regarded as the embodiment of conventionality. Such indeed is the part he plays in the drama. The point of interest in this is that in being so he becomes the representative of a type without any distinguishable individual trait.

In *Major Barbara* a more subtle handling of the bearing of costume is to be seen, the following extracts are of interest :

"Sarah is slender, bored, and mundane, Barbara is robust, jollier and more energetic. Sarah is fashionably dressed ; Barbara is in Salvation Army-Uniform."

And in Act III :

"He starts on seeing Barbara fashionably attired and in low spirits.

Lomax : You've left off your uniform :

Barbara says nothing ; but an expression of pain passes over her face."

Barbara, a peer's grand daughter and a millionaire's daughter, is presented by Shaw in Salvation Army uniform. In this way Shaw exploits the spectacular value of her appearance. At the same time he indicates the singularity of her character by her wearing of this at home on all occasions. In the course of the play Barbara renounces the Army and its dress. Consequently in Act III she is seen in fashionable clothes. Shaw draws pointed attention to its effect upon even such unobservant and tactless character as Lomax and brings out by this means Barbara's attitude not only to the clothes but towards life at the moment. In such a handling of costume the typical and the atypical in character are skilfully drawn out.

Except on rare occasions Shaw regards costume from the point of view of the theatre as a means of establishing typical qualities. For a closer correlation between dress and character, Barrie's treatment of Ernest Wooley and his clothes particularly, and their bearing on character generally, *Admirable Crichton* provides a good example. With regard to Wooley's dress and appearance he says :

"He is dressed in excellent taste, with just the little bit more which shows that he is not without a sense of humour ; the dandiacal are often saved by carrying a smile in their spats, let us say."

Couched in Barrie's whimsical and fanciful style, he puts forth a demand upon not only the costumier but on the character. There is no attempt to describe items of dress as in Shaw. At the same time the effect he seeks is of Wooley's foppishness in dress. It is the effect of 'smartness' of which the wearer is aware. Indeed, under the most trying circumstances and turns of fortune on the island and in society Wooley lives up to the promise of his singularity in clothes. It is 'just that a little bit more' that makes him something more than an empty headed fop in the Restoration style. His foppishness is a sort of protective colouring to disarm suspicion of a native shrewdness and cunning. In the same

play it is dress which confers distinction upon the 'Guv', though made of the same stuff as that of the others. How important a part his dress plays in the impression of personality is dramatically demonstrated in the closing situation of Act III (p. 403). The 'robe', which was to Chrichton the visible token of his regality and affected by him on special occasions, is cast off by him with an air of finality when he has taken the momentous decision to return. The numerous references of the play help to form certain inferences as to its contribution to the naturalistic concept of costuming. The undoubted importance that Barrie attaches to the bearing of dress on appearance, manners, behaviour and actions indicates that he accepts it as the logical product of circumstances. Very few dramatists have gone into its implication or utilised it dramatically as Barrie has.

Among those who have given serious consideration to costume as a means of enhancing characterisation is Granville Barker. Appropriately, his *Madras House* is a saga of two London milliner's establishments. Such plot as there is, centers round the sale of one of these, *Madras House*, as it is called. Something like a philosophy of clothes is evolved as a by-product of the discussion of the Woman question. The debate on feminine dress, staged against the background of a gyrating exhibition of live models is between its individual and social implication. Mr. State, the prospective buyer puts forward one view :

"The Woman's Movement is Woman expressing herself. Let us look at things as they are. What are a Woman's chief means...How often her only means of expressing herself ? Anyway, what is the first thing she spends her money on ? Clothes, gentlemen, Clothes. Therefore I say though at Canon street we may palp with ideas...the ready-made skirt is out of date. ..."

Once woman's right to self-expression is conceded, Mr. State's proposition follows logically. Her chief means, sometimes, her 'only' means of self-expression is her clothes. Every woman wishes to wear clothes according to her own taste, clothes which will express her individuality. She would like to exercise her choice in this matter with complete freedom. But ready-made clothes, such as the skirt, restrict this freedom, since she has to put up with others tastes and specifications. What, therefore, Mr. State wants to do is to throw open to all women the opportunity to enjoy the privilege of unfettered choice as is exercised by the customers of *Madras House*. The right to its seriously challenged by Constantine Madras. While he does not object to women adorning themselves, he does take exception to the kind of 'aphrodisiac', merchandise the place deals in. He objects to the tolerance of a country.

"...where women are let loose with money to spend and time to waste. Encouraged to flaunt their charms on the very streets proud if they see the busman wink."

The ground of Constantine Madras' objection is that prosperous women have been given the opportunity in England to exercise such freedom and they have used it to 'flaunt' their 'charms' shamelessly. They have become so degraded that they are pleased even by the busman's appreciative wink. In other words, he objects because he considers that such women constitute a menace to society.

The debate has more than an academic interest in as much as it has a bearing on at least two characters directly. Mrs. Yates, an employee of the sister firm, pays the penalty of such self-expression. The employers while trading on their good looks severely discourage their doing so on their own account and dismissing them if their self-expression has consequences, outside wedlock. In either case, the independent working women are rendered socially useless being prevented from having children. On the other hand, over-refined women take care to have as few children as possible so as not to interfere with their pleasures. They are taught to cultivate charm and taste. To look beautiful, to dress tastefully becomes an end in itself for them. Jessica defiantly declares this to her husband, when blamed for flirting with Thomas: "I shall never give up dressing beautifully". Besides these, the play also demonstrates the undoubtedly 'aphrodisiac' quality of some of the fashionable dresses and brings out its effect upon susceptible men like Major Thomas. Though in the play the debate ends inconclusively Barker has been able to extend the implication of dress by not only bringing out its scope for expression of personality but the grave responsibility also which such self-expression entails.

Costume in naturalistic drama has not been lightly disposed of as a necessary stage expedient to secure the audiences prompt attention by some arresting device or a rough—and ready identification of characters by profession or types but has been explored diligently for dramatic reflection on character and life.

IV

Acting

In the foregoing pages it has been shown how specific claims in respect of setting, lighting and costume made upon the resources of the theatre by naturalistic drama necessitated a modification of its inherent tendency towards spectacular effects and an increased attention towards contemporary life. In view of the playwrights' demands for those aids

which would, to use Barker's phrase 'illumine some corner of contemporary experience', it is necessary to examine what this drama has to ask of acting and if this demand calls for anything which renders it naturalistic.

Granville Barker had characterised the present as 'the playwright's century' and Cole and Chlnoy, the Historians of Acting had called the last—the actor-managers'. In view of this, the observations of Henry Arthur Jones on acting deserve attention :

"In asking you to accept the dedication of *The Lie*, I abdicate my authorship for the moment, and become one tumultuous response to your splendidly sustained outbursts of emotion."

The compliment has been paid to the leading lady of the cast for her rendering of the heroine, Elinor Shale. He has been so much impressed by her acting that he is prepared to go to the length of crediting her with the creating of the character, thereby abdicating his claim as its creator. In other words, it is the personality of the actress which has been poured into the role so that it cannot be conceived otherwise. From this it follows that a dramatic character is more a creation of the actor's or actress' personality than the author's, that is to say, a dramatic role is éminently a 'vehicle of personality'. Such in fact used to be the standard view of a dramatic role in the great actor-managers century. In such a view, all that the dramatist valued was 'the splendidly sustained outburst of motion'. If display of passion is what Jones regards as the outstanding function of the actor or actress, the devising of highly moving emotional scenes will be the dramatist's aim. Now, intrinsic merit of plays constructed according to this specification apart, it connotes a willing submission of the dramatists to the great actor. Besides, such a dramatist makes no demand the theatre cannot satisfy on its own terms.

Pinero's attitude to the theatre shows no radical difference from that of Jones'. He too regards the production of a 'peculiar kind of emotional effect' as the chief business of the theatre. He is a little more explicit as to how such scenes are produced. It is by means of a 'skilfully devised form and order' that the emotional possibility of a scene is realised. Plays written according to this formula are better constructed as to probability of incidents and situations than those which exploits rank emotionalism. But if the two emotionally stirring scenes, one in *The Thunderbolt*, in which the anguish of Phyllis Mortimore is pressed out to the last drop, the other in *His House In Order* in which the great hortatory speech of the raisonneur Hilary causes a change of heart in Nina Jæsson, are anything to go by, then it must also be

mentioned that the effect is achieved at the expense of consistency in characterisation for in neither case the behaviour is adequately motivated.

In the matter of acting, from what has been said above, the plays of Jones and Pinero, by their own admission, are governed by a consideration for emotional exploitation, well within the histrionic resources of the stage. Yet, it is with the same stage that Shaw expressed grave dissatisfaction as dramatic critic and playwright, and that in the field of acting itself. Commenting upon the acting of a latter day writes Shaw :

"Behind the scenes, too, I had my difficulties. In generation which knew nothing of any sort of acting but drawingroom acting, and which considered a speech of more than twenty words impossibly long, I went back to the classical style and wrote long rhetorical speeches like operatic solos.....As a producer I went back to the forgotten heroic stage business and the exciting or impressive declamation..."

Shaw made this observation in 1950 and had in mind the acting with which he had most to do at the time when his plays first gained the recognition of public performance. As is well-known in stage history, this public acknowledgment came to Shaw with the Vedrenne-Barker season at the Court Theatre during the period 1903-1907 in which the plays of Shaw accounted for the largest number of performance. The target of Shaw's criticism in the above extract, therefore, is the production of this kind of stage and its successors in the decades that followed rather than the commercial theatre on which his plays did not appear until beyond the period under consideration. Before analysing the implication of Shaw's criticism for naturalistic drama, another curious observation of Shaw on acting should be taken into account ;

"There was nothing wrong with the acting ; I cannot remember any actor or actress then occupying a leading position who could be called a duffer : they had all been "through the mill" and could make intruders who had not, look ridiculous."

It is evident that Shaw here refers to a school of acting other than that with which he had his difficulties. The actors of this school had 'gone through the mill' and knew their business. Obviously, Shaw has in mind the experienced and trained actors of the time, such as were likely to be seen on the professional no stage towards which, at that time, Shaw could only cast a longing glance. In other words, Shaw did not find any fault with the acting which the professional had to offer. That is to say, he thought the acting capable of rendering what he demanded in his plays, 'long rhetorical speeches,' heroic stage

business and 'exciting or impressive declamation'. Indeed, rare are the important speeches of characters in his plays which are less than twenty words long, and even if the first prologue of *Caesar and Cleopatra* is ignored as outside the play, there are the notoriously long speeches of Tanner and the Devil in *Man and Superman* to mention only the actor schooled in plays of a kind which required declamation and heroic 'business'. Declamations, rhetorical speeches, debates and discussions these being the very meat of his plays, play of 'ideas' as he liked to call them, it is not surprising also that he should find the acting of the kind with which he had to put up, unsatisfactory. His dissatisfaction, in fact, goes deeper on account of his very conception of his character. This he voices in connection with what he calls 'representational' production :

'Neither have I been what you call a representationalist or realist. I was always in the classical tradition, recognising conscious self-knowledge power of expression, and...a freedom from inhibitions, which in real life would make them monsters of genius...You are right in saying that my plays require a special technique of acting, and in particular great virtuosity in sudden transitions of mood that seem to the ordinary actor to be transition from one 'line of character to another'.

In this passage Shaw makes a very important observation on the qualities of 'stage characters' which differentiate them from characters in real life, at any rate, of his own plays. These are 'conscious self-knowledge', 'power of expression', freedom from inhibitions, which in real life would have made them 'monsters of genius'. And the reason why he does not regard himself as a 'representationalist' or even a 'realist' is perhaps because these do not agree with such a view of stage characters and consequently do not call upon actors to take them into consideration. Also, 'the sudden transitions of mood' which his plays call for are not in accord with the actor's concept of the kind of transition that seems to him normal. The import of Shaw's concept of stage character for acting is to remove it as far from actual life behaviour as possible since in it the stage behaviour of characters would appear monstrous. This explains Shaw's dissatisfaction with the 'drawing-room' school of acting with its surface realism which in its aim of conveying the illusion of conversation such as might well take place in a drawing-room is unlikely to act in a way that would destroy that illusion. To him and for his purposes such acting would fail to render what he required by under-playing. This is the basis of his criticism of acting in Barker's production about which he says :

"His only other fault was to suppress his actors when they pulled out all their stops and declaimed as Shakespeare should be declaimed. They either under-acted or were afraid to act at all lest they should be accused of being "hams" :

From Shaw's opinions of the acting potentialities of the stage of the time when he was actively associated with it either as critic or dramatist it would seem that acting of atleast two schools could be distinguished, whether simultaneous or successive is not very clear or important. He assigns to the old school such actors as Ristori, Salvini and Barrie Sullivan. Significantly he does not include either Irving or Tree, not to mention Bancroft or Alexander. For the old school he has nothing but praises, though it is not clear whether it could or did include the latter. He had other reasons for disapproving of both Irving and Tree, the chief being their unscrupulous handling of Shakespeare's text, but he has often paid tribute to their acting talent. On the other hand he has a confirmed dislike for the acting of the drawing-room school variety. He is inclined also to lump the 'representationalist' school with the other as a kind he disapproves of, Shaw's view of the shortcoming of the stage with which he had to deal was that it did not and could not furnish him with the qualities in its actors that were needed for the rendering of his characters. What the stage could and did give was drawing-room behaviour for which his characters had no use. Shaw's statement raises certain doubts. If what he says concerning the limitations in acting be true, it is not clear where from Jones and Pinero got those 'peculiar emotional effects', those 'splendidly sustained outbursts of emotion', from their actors. Surely actors and actresses capable of such feats could be counted upon to declaim and register 'sudden transitions' of mood. Either Shaw did not share their enthusiasm regarding the capacities of the actors or what seems more likely, he had no access to them, on his own terms. At any rate, this much is clear that he was not satisfied with the actors with whom it fell to his lot to work.

A tradition of surface realism, undoubtedly was, since the days of Robertson and Bancroft at any rate, a stock-in-trade of the theatre from over the last century. The social melodramas of Jones and the society farces of Pinero did require a knowledge and refinement of social intercourse. The plays of Maugham and Sutro ministered occasion to it in the nineteen-tens. The dramatist who extracted the maximum benefit from acting which imitated the surface of life was James Barrie. Numerous are the occasions in his plays which provide a chance to excel in this kind.

Chrichton's superb gesture of getting his shoulders sag and of wring-

ing his hands in a servile manner to indicate his abdication of royalty comes to mind at once. Maggie Wylie's gesture when asked to make a speech after Shand's victory, a speech of two words, 'MY CONSTITUENTS': accompanied by the gesture of stretching out her hand towards them, or Shand's laughter of release at the end of the play, Dearth's transformation from a bright-eyed, happy artist to a bleary-eyed, drunken wreck of one are easily memorable occasions in the theatre. Much of this kind of effect is produced by stage 'business' and by-play. But it must remain a matter of opinion as to how far they enhance insight into character.

Against such background the opinion of Granville Barker, a man combining within himself the three-fold experience of actor, playwright and producer of as variegated fare as Shakespeare, Greek plays, Shaw and Continental drama has undoubted weight.

He says :

"Why do we go to see a play that we really like again and again ? ...It is the elucidation of character that does not pall ; and it is in this virtuosity, all that is learnable allowed for—that the actor's art finds its final task and true achievement".

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER A TREMBLING BALANCE



BIYOT K. TRIPATHY

The story is simple and best stated in the words of Graham Hough :

Constance Chatterley's husband, Sir Clifford Chatterley, is left crippled and impotent by a war wound. He makes the best of his situation, and becomes a writer of some distinction. They are rich and have an intelligent and not disagreeable circle of friends. Constance devotes herself loyally to look-after her husband, but nevertheless becomes gradually oppressed by the aridity and emptiness of her life. She meets Mellors, her husband's game-keeper, a bitter, lonely man who has also been unhappily married. They fall violently in love, she finds a sexual fulfilment that she has never known, and after many misgivings decides to leave her husband...stated so the plot seem almost vulgarly conventional.¹

Stated as a story it certainly appears naive, but a synopsis of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, it appears to me, is invariably less than half the novel. This novel has two themes, only one of which is a story, the other being the social background.² The story alone, isolated from the social theme, savours of romanticism, if one omits to consider its implications in the study of individuality in fulfilment and sacrifice. But one cannot legitimately omit the parallel theme which is entwined with the story. Critics have very often felt something lacking in the novel. It appears unsatisfactory even as a love story. F. R. Leavis attributes this to the deliberateness of the form :

Lady Chatterley's Lover is a courageous, profoundly sincere and very deliberate piece of work ; if it errs it is not through lack of calculation. The trouble rather lies in its being in certain ways too deliberate—too deliberate, at any rate, to be a wholly satisfactory work of art, appealing to imaginatively sensitised feeling.³

This explanation, however, is not wholly satisfactory. A deliberately constructed novel has a greater chance of attaining beauty. *The Rainbow* and *Sons and Lovers* were also deliberate, and because of it, satisfactory. Nor is the fault in the imposition of dramatic discipline on the natural freedom of the novel-form, for the restrictions are organic to the

story rather than imposed. The fault, it appears, lies more in what we expect of the novel or the frame of reference we apply to the story. We expect a spirited love tale, climaxed by descriptions of the sexual act, portraying characters as phallic symbols, and creating an atmosphere altogether sensually romantic. But instead we find ourselves progressively involved in a difficult moral choice involving the approval of Connie's behaviour and the rejection of the industrial world. Apart from this the ebullience of the love-tale toned down by a perception of decay all around ; the sex-descriptions are counterpoised with parallel notes of frustration and pessimism. Mellors, the alleged phallic symbol, is too hesitant, timid, and pessimistic to represent the wild elements. Thus our romantic anticipation is frustrated. What tones down the zest or elan of the love-tale and brings it to the world of realities is the second theme which has proved so elusive and yet which has been so carefully knit into the story by the masterly craft of Lawrence.

The deliberate juxtaposition of themes is evident. In Ch. VIII Constance goes to Mellors for the key to the hut. The love story is about to begin. But Lawrence pulls it down from the romantic to the realistic plane by showing the coarseness of Mellors through his speech. The romantic imagination of Constance is repulsed, "She hated the excess of vernacular in his speech." Yet she is attracted towards the naturalness of Mellors. The following chapter unambiguously introduces the second theme through Mrs Bolton's sketch of the society of Tevershall : a society of drifters who do not wish to belong. All they want permanently is money, with which they can buy pleasure. They just "hang around—and have tea in some fine tea-place like the Mikado—and go to the Pally or the Pictures or the Empire, with some girl." (Ch. IX) And then they drift apart. This is the world of the pseudo-moderns, who have no sense of belonging, no vital contact with others, and no integrated principle of life.⁴ The juxtaposition of the love-theme and social theme thus begins. The one concerns individual aspirations while the other collective social realities. The latter is expressed in terms of various factors, all acting as anti-theses to the love-theme : through a search for the real, through moral misgivings, through descriptions of decaying life, through ideologies of collectivism, and through a recognition of social realities over individual ones. In chapter X Connie opens out to Mellors and they have their first sexual contact. But immediately afterwards follow Connie's misgivings : "Then she wondered, just dimly wondered, why ? Why was this necessary ?...Was it real ?...Her tormented modern-woman's brain still had no rest. Was it real ?" Following this, a description of the squalid industrial world is brought to tone down the exuberance of the

love-affair and to reveal a context where conformity firmly destroys individuality :

And from the top he could see the country, bright rows of lights at Stack Gate, smaller lights at Tevershall pit, the yellow lights of Tevershall and lights everywhere, here and there, on the dark country, with the distant blush of furnaces, faint and rosy, since the night was clear, the roseness of the outpouring of white-hot metal. An undefinable quick of evil in theme ! And all the unease, the ever-shifting dread of the industrial night in the Midlands . There, in the world of the mechanical greedy, greedy mechanism, mechanised greed sparkling with lights and gushing hot metal and roaring with traffic there lay the vast evil thing, ready to destroy whatever did not conform. (Ch. X)

This is followed by a swing back to the love theme ; Connie comes again and again to the reluctant Mellors, until she gets him :

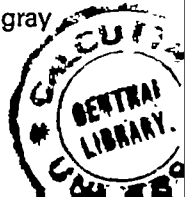
She clung to him unconscious in passion, and he never quite slipped from her, and she felt the soft bud of him within her stirring, and strange rhythms flushing up into her with a strange rhythmic growing motion, swelling and swelling till it filled all her clearing consciousness, and then began again the unspeakable motion that was not really motion, but from deepening whirlpools of sensation whirling deeper and deeper through through all her tissue and consciousness, till she was one concentric fluid of feeling, and she lay there crying in unconscious inarticulate cries. (Ch. X)

Then the chapter shifts its focus to the society-theme with Clifford's denunciation of emotion : "The modern world has only vulgarised emotion by letting it loose. What we need is classic control." The focus stays on Clifford and Mrs Bolton until the chapter ends with the past of Mellors revealed. Chapter XI moves further away from the love-theme and is climaxed by the revelation of the squalidness of Tevershall through the motor drive :

It was as if dismalness had soaked through and through everything. The utter negation of natural beauty, the negation of the gladness of life, the utter absence of the instinct for shapely beauty which every bird and beast has, the utter death of the human intuitive faculty was appalling. (Ch. XI)

And the men :

So she thought she was going home, and saw the colliers trailing from the pits, grey-black, distorted, one shoulder higher than the other, slurring their heavy ironshod boots. Underground gray



faces, whites of eyes rolling, necks cringing from the pit roof, shoulders out of shape. Men ! Men ! Alas, in some ways patient and good men. In other ways non-existent. (Ch. XI)

And Mellors is linked with this theme : "Yet Mellors had come from such a father." Then the chapter moves to a close through the theme of death : the death of Mrs Bolton's husband twenty three years ago. The love theme is totally excluded from this chapter. In the following chapter (Ch.XII) Connie and Mellors meet again and the love story gains momentum.

The rhythmic juxtaposition of themes is no longer ambiguous. That it is deliberate is proved by the almost mechanical and calculated alternation.⁸ In Ch. XIII, which follows, one can logically anticipate the exclusion of the love-theme. And it is excluded. The chapter is all about Clifford, the wheel-chair, and power. In Ch.XIV there is, as one may anticipate, a revival of the love theme. The transition from one theme to the other is not sudden but gradual ; the chapter opens with a reference to Clifford and moves through the past life of Mellors to sexual consummation. There is in the next chapter again a calculated alternation between the two themes : the parallel movement of sexual fulfilment and pessimism ; of the positive approach to life and of negation. A close examination of this chapter will reveal Lawrence's technique. The chapter opens with a reference to Hilda's letters and moves through Clifford's reluctance to let Connie go to Venice, to her coming to Mellors where she declares her desire to marry him : " 'And then when I come back,' she said, 'I can tell Clifford I must leave him. And you and I can go away.' " Then the conversation between the two swings to the society-theme through the Colonel's indictment of the English middle-class to Mellors's denunciation of all England or for that matter, all mankind :

"I tell you, every generation breeds a more rabby generation, with indiarubber tubing for guts and tin legs and tin faces. Tin people ! It's all a steady sort of bolshevism just killing off the human thing, and worshipping the mechanical thing Money, money, money ! All the modern lot get their real kick out of killing the old human feeling out of man, making mincemeat of the old Adam and the old Eve." (Ch.XV)

The mood gets blacker with Mellors advocating the extermination of the human race :

"Quite nice ! To contemplate the extermination of the human species, and the long pause that follows before some other species crops up, it calms you more than anything else. And if

we go on in this way, with everybody, intellectuals, artists, government, industrialists and workers all frantically killing off the last human feeling, the last bit of their intuition, the last healthy instinct ; if it goes on in algebraical progression, as it is going on : then ta-tah ! to the human species ! Good bye ! darling ! the serpent swallows itself and leaves a void, considerably messed up, but not hopeless." (Ch.XV)

Even to bring a child to this world is wrong ; " 'It seems to me a wrong and bitter thing to do, to bring a child into this world.' " This is in immediate contrast with Connie's growing desire for having a child : " 'No ! Don't say it !' she pleaded. 'I think I am going to have one. Say you will be pleased.' " The two following pages poise the two themes delicately. Connie is moving into vital contact : "She pulled open his clothing and uncovered his belly and kissed his navel. Then she laid her cheek on his belly, and pressed her arm round his warm, silent loins. They were alone in the flood." But Mellors's mind is yet full of the negation, deadness, and ugliness of money-centred industrial life : " 'Take yer clothes off an' look at yourselves. Yer ought ter be alive an' beautiful, an' yer ugly an' half dead...That's working for money.' " While this picture of decadence is being painted Connie threads forget-me-nots in his pubic hair and tells him that he has four different kinds of hair in his body. From here there is a swing back through Mellors to gloom and hopelessness :

"Because when I feel the human world is doomed, has doomed itself by its own mingy beastliness, then I feel the Colonies aren't far enough. The moon wouldn't be far enough, because even there you could look back and see the earth, dirty, beastly, unsavoury among all the stars : made foul by men." (Ch. XV)

From the extreme position of negation there is a sharp swing back to fulfilment : the thunder shower, Connie's naked dance in the rain, the chase, the taking, and the flowers connect the life-issues with powers of nature, with fertility, with animal vitality, and with beauty. There in a tapering off towards the end of the chapter. Then Ch. XVI brings in the society-theme with Clifford, Mrs Bolton, and Hilda. This contains forces antagonistic to Connie's way of life. Hilda and Mellors finally fall out and Connie spends her last night with Mellors before leaving for Venice :

It was a night of sensual passion, in which she was a little startled and almost unwilling : yet pierced again with piercing thrills of sensuality, different, sharper, more terrible than the thrills of tenderness, but, at the moment, more desirable. Though a little frightened, she let him have his way, and the reckless, shameless

sensuality shook her to her foundations, stripped her to the very last, and made a different woman of her. It was not really love. It was not voluptuousness. It was sensuality sharp and searing as fire, burning the soul to tinder. (Ch. XVI)

Next morning Hilda arrives and the opposing forces come with her presence: " 'Thank goodness you'll be away from him for some time! ' " Chapter XVII is given to the society-theme. London is life-less:

But she was not happy in London. The people seemed so spectral and blank. They had no alive happiness, no matter how brisk and goodlooking they were. It was all barren.

Paris is no better:

Paris was sad. One of the saddest towns: weary of its now-mechanical sensuality, weary of the tension of money, money, money, weary even of resentment and conceit, just weary to death, and still not sufficiently Americanized or Londonized to hide the weariness under a mechanical jig-jig-jig!

Then Venice, Villa Esmeralda, the over-bearing Sir Alexander, his crowded household, Duncan Forbes, and the gondoliers ready to prostitute themselves. Even Venice is absorbed into the society-theme:

Built of money, blossomed of money, and dead with money. The money-deadness! Money, money, money, prostitution and deadness.

This is followed by the explosion of Tevershall muck and scandal through the letters. Chapter XVIII is one of adjustment with the world to make the living together possible for Constance and Mellors. Here, the society-theme encloses a short act of tender love-making which occurs in the middle of the chapter.

This systematic alternation and juxtaposition of the two themes cannot possibly be accidental. There is a purpose, and the purpose is not mere contrast between two apparently disconnected themes, because as we shall see, one theme derives significance and meaning from the other. The two themes are inter-dependent, and should be studied as such. Contrast there certainly is, and testifies to Lawrence's sense of balance and proportion. In the love-theme emotion and impulse are the integrating principles of life. The wholeness of living vitally is portrayed, a wholeness which Mark Spilka has discovered in Lawrence's portrayal of life.⁶ On the other hand the society-theme, of which the latter Clifford is a part, has money and power as the integrating principle of life:

Money? Perhaps one couldn't say the same there. Money was always wanted. Money, success, the bitch-goddess, as

Tommy Dukes persisted in calling it, after Henry James, that was a permanent necessity...Money you have to have. You needn't really have anything else. (Ch. VI)

Having made this statement Lawrence immediately brings in the other theme to heighten the contrast : "She thought of Michaelis and the money she might have had with him ; and even that she didn't want " (Ch. VI) Thus, even small narrative units are built on tense balance of opposites.

The contrast, however, does not end here. One finds that the modern industrial man is a drifter. He does not have a sense of belonging. His principle of life has disintegrated. He is a pseudo-isolationist and pseudo-modern. If there is anything which integrates his life, it is money, power, and success. As a contrast to this aspect of the society-theme stands Constance, who wants to belong. It is because of her desire to live in rapport with someone in the wholeness of her body and mind that she has to leave Clifford. It is because of this desire of belonging that she could not keep on with Michaelis, who being a drifter had no sense of belonging himself : "Mick couldn't keep anything up. It was part of his very being that he must break off any connection, and be loose, isolated, absolutely lone dog again." (Ch. IV) But Constance must belong :

"No I" She said, "Love me ! Love me, and say you'll keep me. Say you'll keep me ! Say you'll never let me go, to the world not to anybody." (Ch. XVIII).

The effective harmonization of the contrasting themes is a structural feat, but the contrast is not an end in itself. The second theme adds meaning and significance to the first. The two themes are not independent of one another. They are contraries which coexist in life. The society-theme to which Clifford belongs and of which the ugliness of Tevershall is the product moves round the fixed centre of money and power. Constance Chatterley's love for Mellors, therefore, must be viewed as a protest against the fixity—a protest of which we have noted examples in the earlier novels of Lawrence. The love of Constance is, however, not merely a protest. Nor is it concentric to sex. Had sex been the end Michaelis would have served her. Her centre of action is her individuality. That is why Lawrence has made an effective juxtaposition between tradition and individuality through the contrast between Clifford and Constance. Clifford demands traditional response from his wife by asserting that she remains his, while Constance is equally strong in asserting that her response to the environment must arise from her individuality. The two streams of life which Lawrence has depicted in

his earlier novels have been depicted here also. On the one hand is the society-theme the components of which derive sanction from money, power, and tradition, and on the other are Constance and Mellors whose actions derive from no external source but from within them. The latter, Lawrence would have us believe, is the creative way to live and evolve : to live fully is to live from the creative centre within. The love-theme has this positive basis. In this context we may re-examine the structural significance of the sudden change of scene from Wragby to Venice. The change of scene is simultaneous with Connie's decision to reject the forces of money, power, and tradition, the forces which try to make her life a mechanistic function. The past, as it were, is totally rejected. Constance becomes ultra-historical. There is a growth into something new. Structurally Venice stands as a function of this novelty ; the geographical shift becomes a function of the thematic shift or of the final resolution. Structure and theme become organic. It must be noted that though the form of this novel appears simpler than that of *Women in Love*, the organization of the components of the themes is as complex.

One can now easily discern the desire for the wholeness of living, and the desire to have a vital principle of life as it has been revealed through the love-theme by systematic contrast. Without the parallel society-theme and the systematic contrast the significance would have eluded us as it eluded Hough when he wrote about the "vulgarly conventional" story of Lady Chatterley. If a synopsis is made afresh it will not appear vulgarly conventional. Constance Chatterley is a healthy woman in the prime of her youth. Unlike the pseudo-modern, she wishes to live by an integrating principle of life. Money, success, and power, which are relied upon by the modern industrial populace, appear inadequate to her, as all the vital elements of man are not accommodated in their scheme. Unlike her counterparts in the modern society she cannot bear the feeling of drifting on indefinitely. And her husband does not have the capacity of giving her the security of belonging. This is not merely because he is sexually disabled, but because he is a drifter like Michaelis. And his inability to give her a sense of belonging is clearly expressed in his generous but vulgar suggestion that she could have children through other men. As her restlessness grows, she tries to fulfil herself through sex, with Michaelis. The trial gives only partial and temporary relief. Sex is not an end in itself and so Michaelis is rejected in spite of his capacity for giving her sexual satisfaction and in spite of the fact that Clifford is agreeable to the temporary prostitution of Constance. She is, however, required to pledge her soul to Clifford, while she can do what she likes

with her body. The position is impossible and degrading. Constance fails to live in such a situation. At this moment she finds in Mellors the qualities which may integrate life. He is not a by-product of the industrial civilization. He is not a drifter. He is not pseudo-modern because, in spite of his isolation, he is not empty of an integrating principle of life. He is poor class, but real. By his old-fashionedness Lawrence is not preaching a back-to-nature idea. Mellors is not a symbol of the primitive man. He is modern in the sense in which Jung has described the truly modern man: "...the really modern man is often to be found among those who call themselves old fashioned."⁷

With him she rediscovers sex and is stripped to the primal self where life is connected with fundamental life-issues and urges. The only thing for her is to go to Mellors. And she does. Clifford demands that she stay as his wife for she is committed to him by status. In this conflict between commitment to society and commitment to self—between tradition and individuality—Constance's individuality wins and she leaves Clifford. The growth of individualism is a fact of modern life, and the decision of Constance is realistic as it is in consonance with recognized facts: "But the greatest creation of the new way of life was a psychological one: the gain in individuality."⁸ Thus the decisions taken by the characters derive—at least on one level—from psychological and sociological facts. There is no didacticism; Lawrence does not intrude.

We have studied two functions of the second theme: the first was the contrast it provided to tone down the loudness of the love-theme, and the second was the significance it lent to the love-theme. Its final function is its contribution to the realism of the story. Because of this our conventional anticipation of the story is frustrated and we are dissatisfied. The cause of dissatisfaction is neither deliberateness, nor dramatic restriction. The cause lies in the juxtaposition between the society-theme and the love-theme through a series of contrasts; between the real and the aspirational, the ugly and the beautiful, the disintegrating and the integral, the intellectual and impulsive, the mechanical and the creative. Lawrence wanted to produce a balance between the two. We are dissatisfied because we have not been oriented to receive it as such. While we search for an undiluted story of love and sex, Lawrence's depiction of modern decadence surprises and frustrates us. The juxtaposition is fundamental and deep-seated: it is a contrast between the general and the particular, between the conventional and the unique. Lawrence develops in parallel the general drift of modern life, the growth of a mechanical

civilization with men becoming increasingly isolated and rootless, yet without identity, lost in masses, and the particular life which overcomes isolation with union through an assertion of individuality which is apparently stable and rooted but in a deeper sense completely isolated, connected within only with the basic life-issues and urges, heading nothing else. It shows Lawrence's allotropic vision—consistent with Lawrence's perception of life—whereby he is capable of observing simultaneously the general drift of life on the one hand and the individual life on the other. Yet the structural solidarity and organic unity of the novel are remarkable. The form is distinctly harmonic, as in *Women in Love*, with simultaneous development of various themes. Both the society-theme and the love-theme move simultaneously through time, while there is also a movement in value. The form has the same complex beauty as of *Women in Love* with the difference that it has lesser variety but greater compactness.

Eliseo Vivas, however, feels that there is no organic unity in the story. He says that, on a careful look the book falls apart into two stories whose proper relationship has been bungled.⁹ The two stories he finds are the stories of Constance and Mellors, and of Clifford and Mrs Bolton. Vivas says, "When we step back from the canvas in order to grasp it as a whole we discover to our astonishment that the story of Clifford does not keep its subordinate place."¹⁰ He assigns for it biographical reasons, the validity of which is controversial. But we are concerned here with the aesthetic aspect of it. Vivas feels that the story of Clifford assumes unwieldy importance towards the end of the novel. He assumes that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is "undeniably an anti-Clifford tract"¹¹ and that Clifford has been treated as the "villain" of the piece;¹² Lawrence has given Clifford this undue importance in the process of vilifying the Cliffords of the world for personal reasons. The vilification question apart, one fails to understand how else could the story have been treated. Clifford Chatterley is an integral part of the society-theme and the axis of the moral choice in the love story. Take Clifford away and the very foundation of the moral challenge is weakened. Moreover, the story is constituted of Connie's relationship with Clifford and with Mellors. That justifies his importance in the first part of the story. The climax comes in Ch. XV when Connie finally resolves to marry Mellors. Thereafter Lawrence could not possibly have ignored Clifford. Any negligence of Clifford would have left a loose end unresolved and would have been a structural defect. Clifford has to be dealt with conclusively, and this Lawrence has done. He has shown a slow but subtle change come over Clifford towards the end. The

seed of this change was sown earlier, when Constance appointed Mrs Bolton to look after Clifford. He resented it but soon adjusted himself to it. His need was not for a wife, nor did he have the emotional force to establish vital contact with his wife: "With Connie, he was a little stiff. He felt he owed her everything, everything, and he showed her the utmost respect and consideration, so long as she gave him mere outward respect. But it was obvious he had a secret dread of her." (Ch. IX) His need was for a caretaker. So he gradually accepted Mrs Bolton as a substitute for Constance and was happy with her:

He was not aware how much Mrs Bolton was behind him. He did not know how much he depended on her. But for all that, it was evident that when he was with her his voice dropped to an easy rhythm of intimacy, almost a trifle vulgar.....

Only when he was alone with Mrs Bolton did he really feel a lord and a master, and his voice ran on with her almost as easily and garrulously as her own could run. (Ch. IX)

For him the functional utility of a wife would not have been any more. In the process of the story Clifford gradually discovered himself. Under Mrs Bolton's influence Clifford began to take a new interest in the mines. He began to feel he belonged. A new sort of self-assertion came into him:

It was Mrs Bolton's talk that really put a new fight into Clifford...

But under Mrs Bolton's influence, Clifford was tempted to enter this other fight, to capture the bitch-goddess by brute means of industrial production. Somehow, he got his pecker up. In one way, Mrs Bolton made a man of him, as Connie never did. ...

He began to read again his technical works on the coal-mining industry, he studied the Government reports, and he read with care the latest things on mining and the chemistry of coal and of shale which were written in German. ...

He went down to the pit day after day, he studied, he put the general manager, and the overhead manager, and the underground manager, and the engineers through a mill they had never dreamed of. Power! He felt a new sense of power flowing through him: power over all these men, over the hundreds and hundreds of colliers. ...

And he seemed verily to be re-born. Now life came into him

He had been gradually dying, with Connie, in the isolated private life of the artist and the conscious being. Now let all that go. Let it sleep. He simply felt life rush into him out of the coal, out of the pit. (Ch. IX)

The later Clifford is masculine and virile.¹³ At the end we find him merged with the society-theme of the story. He evolves into a man whose integrating principle of life is money and success. The process of the evolution starts Ch. IX and culminates in his rejection of emotion and his outlining of his industrial philosophy in Ch. XIII. It is utterly materialistic. Society, he imagines, has two basic appetites :

He realized now that the bitch-goddess of success had two main appetites : one for flattery, adulation, stroking and tickling, such as writers and artists gave her ; but the other a grimmer appetite for meat and bones. And the meat and bones for the bitch-goddess were provided by the men who made money in industry. (Ch. IX)

There are those who supply materials for the appetites. The writers and the artists, who simply supply non-material needs, are flatterers. The real bosses or aristocrats are the "men who own and run industries" (Ch. XIII), and supply material needs. Society is made up of the unalterable masses—" 'It is the masses : they are unchangeable...The masses are unalterable' " (Ch. XIII)—and the bosses. Both are parts of fate : " 'Aristocracy is a function, a part of fate. And the masses are a functioning of another part of fate. The individual hardly matters.' " (Ch. XIII) With the individual, thus, the values of the individual's existence are also destroyed. When Clifford asks about Proust at dinner time, Connie says, " 'He doesn't have feeling, he only has streams of words about feelings. I am tired of self-important mentalities.' " (Ch. XIII) To counter this assault on his cerebral existence he rejects the whole world of feeling as animality : " 'Would you prefer self-important animalities ?' " (Ch. XIII) As the novel proceeds Clifford grows in complexity. To say that he lacks density, as Sagar does would be unreasonable.¹⁴

This Clifford is not lampooned, not a villain, but has become very real, holding a philosophy which is in fact available in modern industrial life and is legitimately practised, though Connie in her headless way is opposed to it and goes up in a rage crying, " 'Him and buying people !' " (Ch. XIII) The juxtaposition is clear. Love in the love-theme is counterpoised against money and power in the society-theme into which Clifford gradually grows until he both represents and defines it. His character is deftly given a roundness before he is withdrawn. Clifford has to stay

till the end, firstly because, he should be rounded off and satisfactorily disposed, and, secondly, to provide thematic contrast, as he has evolved into the society theme and represents it. When we got a final glimpse of him in the last chapter where he meets Connie, he is perfectly rounded in his attitude. When Constance says that she should stay with the man she loves, he replies: "No, I don't see it! I don't give tuppence for your love, nor for the man you love. I don't believe in that sort of cant." (Ch. XIX) The importance of Clifford can hardly be called a structural defect. On the contrary it testifies to Lawrence's skill. As to why Mrs Bolton exists the reasons are obvious: one must remember that she represents the society-theme and, through her, sketches of Tevershall society have been revealed from Ch. IX onwards; partly through her presence Clifford has been assimilated into the society-theme; through Clifford's attachment to her Lawrence shows that a wife is superfluous for Clifford; and lastly, as Graham Hough has pointed out, she is a counterpoint for Mellors and contributes to the balancing of the story.¹⁵ Thus, there is hardly any structural imbalance.

Moore, discussing Clifford, points out another defect: "If Lawrence actually depended this much on his daemon, the daemon had become less reliable than he had been in the past. For the physical crippling of Clifford greatly weakens the story."¹⁶ This imputation derives from the assumption that Clifford was a symbol of the sexless, prudish modern aristocrat. But Lawrence has time and again denied this, and has asserted that the characters were not originally conceived as symbols:

As to whether the symbolism is intentional—I don't know. Certainly not at the beginning, when Clifford was created. When I created Clifford and Connie, I had no idea what they were or why they were. They just came, pretty much as they are. But .. when I read the first version, I recognised that the lameness of Clifford was symbolic .. Yet the story came as it did, by itself, so I left it alone. Whether we call it symbolic or not, it is, in the sense of its happening, inevitable.¹⁷

Similar is the reiteration in the letter written to D. V. Lederhandler. The symbolism which Lawrence discovered later was unconscious and accidental, and has since been forced upon him:

Yes, the paralysis of Clifford is symbolic—all art is *au fond* symbolic, conscious or unconscious. When I began *Lady C.*, of course I did not know what I was doing—I did not deliberately work symbolically. But by the time the book was finished I realised what unconscious symbolism was. And I wrote the book three times—I have three complete MSS—pretty different,

yet the same. The wood is of course unconscious symbolism perhaps even the mines—even Mrs Bolton.¹⁸

A novelist starts with some basic facts and then builds upon them. Clifford, the cripple, was such a basic fact. He was not conceived as a healthy man and then crippled due to the author's prejudice or his desire to reduce him to a symbol. If we change these basic premises we change the whole work. A symbol is something which stands for something entirely different or for an idea. If Clifford is said to stand for sexlessness, he would be a symbol. But such an understanding of Clifford is one of bits of him. He includes the symbol but is much more than that. He represents a way of life lived by many today. In so far as he represents other people, projects a way of life, reflects certain complex responses to a new age he is not a symbol; much more than that. Laurentian symbolism is always vague, undefined, and complex, and Laurentian character is always more than a symbol; he retains too much independence and autonomy as an existent to be entirely representative of the subsistent. Moreover, I am inclined to agree with Hough when he says that far from being a defect, the crippling of Clifford strengthens Lawrence's case. Far from "Lampooning" the shallow 'young aristocrats,' as Moore suggests,¹⁹ Lawrence was deliberately swaying the sympathy of the readers towards Clifford by crippling him.²⁰ Lawrence was fully aware of what he was doing :

I realised that it was perhaps taking an unfair advantage of Connie to paralyse him technically. It made it so much vulgar of her to leave him. Yet the story came as it did, by itself, so I left it alone.²¹

The crippling of Clifford makes the moral issues in the novel painfully difficult for Constance and challenging for all of us, dividing us and our sympathies for the two. Clifford is no villain, nor Constance Diana. The meticulously managed balance of sympathy contributes to the objectivity of the novel and Hough correctly points out that Lawrence is "remarkably dispassionate towards his character."²² *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is beyond question a rare technical achievement where issues are always pushed to the brink and the opposites are kept forever trembling in balance.

REFERENCES

1. *The Dark Sun : A Study of D.H. Lawrence* (London, 1956), p. 151.
2. Cf. Mark Schorer, "Introduction to *Lady Chatterley's Lover*," reproduced in, *Appropos of Lady Chatterley's Lover and Other Essays* (Harmondsworth, England,

- 1961). Schorer recognizes the "thematic contrast" (p. 163). He calls the two themes "social world" and "lyrical world" (p. 131). But Schorer goes on to interpret the juxtaposition as an interplay of symbols. It is, however, found difficult to agree with Schorer when he says, "it is a novel in which everything is symbolic." (p. 146)
3. *D. H. Lawrence : Novelist* (London, 1964), p. 228.
 4. *Vide* C. G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of Soul* (London, 1953), p. 228. "Pseudo-modern" is Jung's phrase.
 5. Even some of the coitus infuse doubt and remorse in Constance, viz. first and fourth with Mellors. In the latter the ridiculing of the coital experience comes after Mellors's first ejaculation.
 6. Mark Spilka, *The Love Ethic of D. H. Lawrence* (Indiana, 1957), p. 5, 23.
 7. Jung, *Modern Man*, p. 229.
 8. J. A. C. Brown, *The Social Psychology of Industry* (Harmondsworth, England, 1958), p. 28 ff.
 9. Eliseo Vivas, *D. H. Lawrence : The Failure and the Triumph of Art* (London, 1960), p. 121.
 10. *Ibid*, p. 122.
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
 12. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
 13. Keith Sagar, *The Art of D. H. Lawrence* (Cambridge, 1966), p. 185.
 14. *Cf. Ibid.*, p. 196.
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YEATS INDIA AND INDIAN CRITICS

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It is natural that in his search for relevance in the studies of a foreign literature, an Indian Scholar should be led to lay more emphasis on those aspects of the writer's thought which will help him to understand his own response to experience. In Yeatsian studies this constitutes almost a challenge to our sense of proportion. One sometimes feels that we react in such a way as if we had a sort of vested interest in things mystical and religious. Do we feel competent to study Yeats just because we have more sympathy for his occult studies or because we have a more authentic knowledge, owing to our instinctive and hereditary understanding of his esoteric themes? Is it our ambition to give a superior verdict on Yeats's understanding of eastern thoughts and attitudes and thus offer to the uninitiated western readers some guidance as to how much of Yeats's arcane systems should be taken seriously? Or, more fundamentally, is it our aim to say that the knowledge and understanding of Indian thought can explain all of Yeats's works and thus set out to annotate Yeats with the help of the Indian sources? Yeats is too complex a poet to permit us such an easy elucidation. But it is also true that there is a tendency among many western critics to overlook such cross cultural influence as an idiosyncrasy. In fact it was once fashionable to play down Yeats's interest in eastern thought at just a decadent poet's fascination for the exotic and the remote.

Even Dr. Narayana Menon in his study on *The Development of W. B. Yeats* (1942) found Yeats's interest in Indian thought 'naive' and his adoration of Mohini Chatterjee "pathetic". Dr. Menon went as far as to endorse T. S. Eliot's remark that the influence of Hindu thought in Europe was largely due to Romantic misunderstanding. Dr. Narayana Menon added :

'The same is true of Yeats though he did not apply himself to the study of Eastern thought and philosophy with half the seriousness of any of these (Schopenhauer, Von Hartmann etc.)' p. 13.

This is of course not tenable any longer since we have a more complete information about Yeats's reading and we know Yeats did try to understand Indian thought seriously enough. This is evident in Yeats's remark on A. E. :

I wonder what he would have been had he not met in early life the poetry of Emerson and Whitman...and those translation of the Upanishads, which it is so much *harder* to study by the sinking flame of Indian tradition than by the serviceable lamp of Emerson and Whitman.¹

And it was the *harder* path which always fascinated Yeats. So I don't think we should be apologetic or self-denying about the fact that Indian thought did have considerable impact on Yeats's thought and sensibilities. Recently Professor Naresh Guha in his book² on Yeats and Professor Farag³ of Egypt in a centenary essay have successfully shown that this interest was not at all 'spasmodic'.

Now if we emphasize this aspect of Yeats's preoccupation, do we of necessity engage ourselves in 'occultation' of Yeats or try to dislodge him from the main tradition of English poetry? This was a fear expressed by Allen Tate and it was echoed somewhat mutely also by Dr. Rajan in his monograph on Yeats. Here we have to start with some disentanglement.

For a deeper appreciation of the Hindu influence on western thought we must look beyond the great shadow of Madame Blavatsky and her Theosophical Lodge and a little forward from what T. S. Eliot thought the Romantic misunderstanding of Hindu ideas. The years around the Mutiny and upto the 1880's were the period when serious understanding of Indian philosophy and religion took place in the West. And those who disseminated this new interest were all writing from the central tradition of British thought. Buckle's famous *History of Civilization* (1857), which claimed to be written from a scientific point of view, had a whole chapter devoted to Indian thought. The Rev. Frederick Denison Maurice whom J. S. Mill described as one of the seminal minds of the mid-nineteenth century and whom Gladstone called the spiritual splendour of their age paraphrased the *Bhagawat Gita* in his *Ancient Philosophy* (1850). He also remarked that the commercial civilisation of the West had a lesson to learn from the 'Hindoos' who thought that man was made for something else than to buy and sell; to eat, drink and die'. Another great Anglican divine, the Bishop Colenso of Natal, who created a great sensation by his critical examination of *The Pentateuch* (1863-1878) [where he sought to prove 'the groundlessness of the notion of scriptural inspiration',] felt called upon 'to fill up the aching void,'⁴ by referring to a few Indian hymns. Similarly a Dean of St. Pauls, the Rev. R. W. Church in *The Gift of Civilisation* (1874) commented on the translation of the *Vedas* to the following effect :

'It is not surprising that these mysterious utterances breaking on us from the dawn of time should have awakened a very deep

interest. They seem to require us to revise our judgment and *widen our thought.*' p. 382

'To widen our thought', this aspect is to be emphasised rather than the Theosophical claim of offering a substitute to Christianity. Needless to remind ourselves that this was the period in which Max Muller accomplished the heroic translation of the *Sacred Books* of the East and the translation of the Vedas. And Max Muller did not change his religion, nor did he ever visit India and sit at the feet of any Guru.

It is also interesting to note that the fashionable vogue of Spiritualism, in the sense of communicating with the spirit of the dead, found, as propagators in the 'seventies among others of considerable eminence, several serious scientists like Wallace (the co-discoverer with Darwin of the theory of evolution,) and Sir William Crookes, the famous Physicist. It is quite certain that Spiritualism did not simply thrive as "a Papier mache for the idle rich", as George Eliot remarked in one of her letters, but had considerable psychological appeal for the Protestants, especially at the time of bereavement. Only this can account for the great popularity of spiritualism among all classes in America in the later half of the nineteenth century. A historian of British theological thought has remarked that Spiritualism satisfied certain emotional needs of people who were deprived of any sense of personal immortality owing to the spread of materialistic thought and the rationalistic doctrine of the Church: 'The Church of the day', says he, 'was opposed to prayers for the dead and in the Burial Service seemed to place all the emphasis on the sorrow of parting and to neglect the note of Christian joy.'⁵

This is important because a need for some assurance of immortality developed considerable interest in the Upanishadic philosophy of the Self and the neo-Platonic philosophy of Plotinus. According to Yeats Plotinus was the first in Europe to establish as sole source the timeless individuality or Daimon instead of the Platonic Idea⁶ and thus affirmed that man has lived many times, that nothing exists but a stream of souls. This led to Yeats's interest in spiritualism and to his affirmation of personality through his peculiar brand of mysticism:

All about us there seems to start up a precise inexplicable teeming life, and the earth becomes once more, not in rhetorical metaphor, but in reality, sacred. [*Explorations* p. 368]

With such a background of development towards an understanding of mysticism it will be wrong to dismiss Yeats's and, for that matter, the late nineteenth century interest in Indian thought as simply a pursuit of a vogue. Mr. Elliott-Binns has pointed out in his book on *Religion in the Victorian Era* that mysticism which was a word of abuse in Pro-

testant theology became acceptable even in orthodox circles towards the close of the nineteenth century. So much so that the highly respectable Oxford philosopher J. R. Green prophesied in the Eighties that the 'Faith of the future will be found in the union of mysticism with the freedom of thought and enquiry'.⁷ Dean Inge thought it important to choose mysticism as the subject for his Bampton lecture in 1899. Professor William James delivered his Gifford lecture at Edinburgh in 1901 on mysticism and said that his purpose was to rehabilitate the element of feeling in religion and subordinate its intellectual part. (*The varieties of Religious Experience*—p. 501). Thus it is quite apparent that the main tradition of thought in England was moving, away from its rational and orthodox strongholds, towards a new synthesis, in the later nineteenth century, the period when Yeats matured.

Northorp Fry has recently remarked⁸ that Yeats's debt to the Catholic poets of the late nineteenth century has perhaps not been sufficiently studied. My own apprehension is that Yeats derived his sustenance not so much from the Catholic mystics as from the heterodox mysticism of the East because he was more concerned with the unity of Being than with the union of the human soul with God.

But more important for our present purpose is to state that Yeats sought a new tradition, as he himself said, through dreams and fairies and a fardel of stories, and that he found it in the stream of mystical thought which was developing in the later half of nineteenth century. Owing to this search for a new tradition, a new subject-matter, which is evident even in his earliest poetry, Yeats cannot be placed without some qualification with the effete post-Romantic group of poets of the nineties.⁹ With the Decadent poets one feels that even the best of them in their best moments worked from the conviction that, as Davidson put it, 'The fires are out and I must hammer the cold iron'¹⁰, whereas even in Yeats's early poems it is the element of fire that enlivens everything ; we come across phrases such as the 'sudden-flaming' words even though in sadness ; we hear of the parrot raging at his own image ; of 'Cuchulain battling with the bitter tide' ; of the secret spirit of King Goll where glowed the 'whirling and wandering fire' ; the fire in the old fox-hunter's eyes that gleamed till the moment of death listening to the huntsman's 'gay wandering cry' ; or of the old pensioner who could spit into the face of time that transfigured him. It is the affirmation of rage and fire and of heroism that dominates Yeats's early vision and thus associates his poetry with all those hopeful dreams of a renewal of civilisation which inspired the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Yeats has said it himself :



Our civilisation was about to reverse itself, or some new civilisation was about to be born from all that our age had rejected...
(Explorations p. 393)

It is interesting to note that this idea of spiritual resurgence of the world was specially heralded by the Hermetic Society which was founded in England in 1881 by Edward Maitland and Mrs. Anna Kingsford, four years ahead of the Dublin Society. Yeats makes no mention of this English society but it is very unlikely that Yeats should not have heard of this couple and their work *The Perfect Way* (1881) which the authors thought fulfilled the popular prophecies of the time. The old world had come to an end and they had given the last blow to the old dogma-ridden religion and material science. But they also made it possible to rehabilitate religion by showing the new way of interpreting the myths of religion in terms of allegories and emblems of the drama of each human soul. It might also be interesting for Yeats students to note another point about this spiritual partnership, namely that their book *The Perfect Way* was materialised through visions seen by Mrs. Kingsford and Maitland's interpretation of them. One might think harshly of them for their self-delusion in thinking of themselves as the harbingers of the new spiritual dawn, but they belonged to the same tradition we are trying to present in this paper. And one cannot deny that Yeats wrote from a similar angle of vision, as a letter to O'leary he wrote in 1892 :

The mystical life is the centre of all that I do...and I have always considered myself a voice of what I believe to be a greater renaissance—the revolt of the soul against the intellect—now beginning in the world.

We have tried to show that in this 'greater renaissance' a considerable inspiration was supplied by Indian thought ; and that Yeats in his 'pathetic'¹¹ adoration of Mohini Chatterjee and in his life-long studies of Indian philosophy and the various branches of religion and thought, was trying to absorb as much as was necessary for his creative dynamism. More than that we need not assert.

II

I have said earlier that the besetting danger that awaits an Indian Scholar in approaching Yeats is to make either too much or too little of Yeats' response to Indian thought. Once Doctor Rajan received a pungent stricture from F. R. Leavis for trying to 'correct Mr. Eliot authoritatively about Krishna'; we find similar attempts on the part of Narayan Menon in his book on Yeats :

The Hindu in the sculptured caverns of Elephanta discovers a profound answer to the riddle of the world, He (Yeats) says in the introduction to the works of Blake. One would think by that he understood the deep significance of Hindu art, the concept of Samadhi, of art as a means of edification. But no in the next breath he says that the gypsy finds an equally efficacious answer in the markings of the sea-shell that he carries to bring his good fortune...(Op. cit. P. 13)

After that Dr. Menon goes on to dismiss Yeats's interest in Indian themes as just 'Romantic conventions' an affectation of 'a vogue' and a fancy for the 'distant lure', which of course no serious reader of Yeats could admit. It is very difficult to explain this reaction of Dr. Menon except as a peculiar symptom of the Hindu mind which arrogates to itself a special spiritual understanding denied to others; and there was no ground for being annoyed at the introduction of the Gipsy sea-shell because Yeats held the shells in great mystical reverence: The sea-shell features in Yeats poetry as a symbol from the very first poem of the *Crossways* (1889) and was indeed an object of mystical adoration in the West. For Yeats it was a symbol of poetic as well as spiritual concentration and of all efforts towards perfection. Elsewhere he has remarked:

Is it not certain that the Creator yawns in earthquake and thunder
and other popular displays, but toils in rounding the delicate
spiral of a shell? ¹²

What could be more expressive as a symbol of the psychological process in attaining Samadhi than the making of a shell at the bottom of the sea? As Yeats's friend Sturge Moore says more explicitly in his celebrated poem of that name:

Nature shows nothing more rare
Than shells, not even flowers; no
Unfading petals tinted glow
Where ocean's obscure weight is air;
Where winds are currents, streams or tides,
Life to perfect their beauty hides.

...
Long years immersed,
Secreted by toil, conscience, thought,
Are formed art, virtue, truth.

It is evident that Dr. Menon dismissed Yeats's analogy without giving it much thought and this is also true about his other statement that 'except for the titles and the names the Indian poems are just Romantic convention.' Though these early poems cannot be called achievements by



Yeatsian standard, yet their themes were important to Yeats and he returned to them later to give a fuller expression. The Theme of 'Anashuya & Vijaya' "a man loved by two women", as Yeats's notes elaborate, "who had the one soul between them, the one woman waking when the other slept, and knowing but day light as the other only night", reappears in the ballad on 'The Three Bushes' and the reincarnation theme which we find in poems like 'The Indian upon God' remain an absorbing subject for Yeats in all his poetry and plays. But one must admit that the vitality of this Indian impact came considerably to his imaginative world from Yeats's ability to connect the oriental with his Celtic heritage.

After claiming so much we must however point out that the central tradition from which Yeats wrote was that of the Western thought and poetry though his understanding of them was widened by his awareness of the mystical influences of the East. This basic fact should not be ignored. Though Yeats derived considerable imaginative vitality from his Eastern studies he did not change his fundamental Western outlook and intention nor did he forget the audience whom he was addressing.

So when an Indian critic approaches Yeats he has to check the temptation, to expect too much or assume too little, in the acceptance and understanding of eastern ideas by Yeats. For instance it is wrong to assume as Professor R. K. Dasgupta has done, that Yeats's inability to do full justice to Tagore's works is an example of "the Westernman's critical failure in respect of our literature. And it is essentially a failure of civilisation."¹⁸ It will take more space than I can afford in this paper to explore the significance of Professor Dasgupta's remark—but as a student of Yeats I feel it is a hurried conclusion and has arisen out of the usual temptation mentioned above. In spite of a great mutual admiration, and, as far as Yeats was concerned, some absorption of literary influence (as shown by Professor Naresh Guha in his study of *W. B. Yeats* and by Dr. F. F. Farag in his essay "Oriental and Celtic elements in the poetry of W. B. Yeats,") Yeats and Tagore were essentially different in temperament and spiritual outlook. The difference is fundamentally, in Yeatsian language, between one who looked upon 'the Soul as a mirror' and the other who looked upon it as 'a brazier'; one, a poet of delicate sincerity, the other a poet of the mask and imitative energy; at a metaphysical level, one looked at reality as a Single Being and the other considered it as a congeries of beings. This is what Yeats described as a difference of Primary and Antithetical vision; but it is wrong to imply that it constitutes a barrier between two civilisations. In terms of Poetry even within Ireland we have seen the achieve-

ments of A. E. and W. B. Yeats; to be sure, it will be wrong to judge their works in measure of their respective mystical attainment.

To assume that because Yeats did not accept all the usual conclusions of Indian traditional philosophy—his knowledge and understanding of them must be incomplete or just 'adventitious', is a typical Indian attitude which we will do well to overcome. In this connection Mokashi Punekar's study of *The Later Phase in the Development of W.B. Yeats* (Dharwar, 1966) may be briefly noted.

I must admit, this book has the unique merit of considering Yeats's thought or systems of thought with a seriousness which only an Indian critic could have supplied. The writer says in his introduction :

'This work which is the fruit of over ten years unmitigated labour has left the author a very tired man. But he is rewarded in other ways, for instance, in framing his own understanding of life.'

However salutary such a critical effort may be in terms of one's spiritual attainments, it leaves the impression, to phrase it in Yeats's language, that 'we do not seek truth in argument or in books but clarification of what we already believe.' (*Exploration* p. 310)

The fundamental question which seem to be gnawing at the heart of Mokashi Punekar's study is whether Yeats had affirmed the Indian tradition of thought and philosophy or had rejected it. We have poems like 'Vacillation', "A Dialogue of Self and Soul" and numerous other prose statements where the problem of the One and the Many seemed to be resolved in terms of Life and the 'Frog spawn of a blind man's ditch'; more in terms of a tragic acceptance of life than in the hope of transcendence. So inevitably the logic of the barriers of civilisation is invoked :

'The Western civilisation could receive only an art religion, a subjective impulse. But what norms he needed for the dynamics of a subjective existence, he received among others, from Indians, and particularly from Shri Purohit Swami.' (Op. cit)

Mokashi Punekar offers 'The Metaphysical Songs' as a positive achievement possible due to Purohit Swami's influence; what made the mystical pure abstraction suddenly singable? he asks and answers that they are 'a monument of Yeats's triumph over his fear of the subjective abstraction.' Shri Purohit chased away Yeats's fear of being 'struck dumb' by spirituality. He goes on to say that 'what Yeats wanted was a living example of a spiritual life at peace with a joyous psychical energy.' In Shri Purohit Swami he got such a norm. But is it true to say that in these poems, 'Yeats has put his seal of approval on asceticism?' I should be more inclined to accept the view of Dr. Rajan who remarks

that 'they complement the Crazy Jane poems by representing the sexuality of spirit rather than the spirituality of sex.'¹⁴ Dr. Rajan's reading is critically more useful though we may reject his oversimplified explanation that these poems are simply the first fruit of the steinach operation.' Such an explanation would surely earn Mokashi Punekar's stricture on the 'shallow humanist who display an open vested interest in doubting and denigrating Yeats's mysticism'. But we have to make it clear to Dr. Mokashi Punekar that our vested interest is not on the vindication of asceticism either.

Barring these reservations one must be grateful to Dr. Mokashi Punekar and also to Dr. Naresh Guha¹⁵ for facing the question of Yeats's relation with Indian thought in a more unabashed way. The enigmatic character of Shri Purohit Swami who was dismissed by Professor Jeffares as a diverting influence on Yeats has come to occupy a distinct position in relation with Yeats's later mastery over his spiritual studies, in Mokashi Punekar's book. And Professor Naresh Guha's book has the distinction of being a very readable analysis of Yeats' interest in tantric and yogic tradition—and its possible impact in helping Yeats to synthesise his interest in physiology and metaphysics at the height of poetry. Dr. Guha has also thrown more light on Mohini Chatterjee who charmed Yeats so very profoundly in his most impressionable years; and Dr. Guha has finally settled the controversy about Yeats's disenchantment with Tagore, made prominent by Abinash Bose's pamphlet "My Interview with Yeats" (1937). Dr. Guha points out that Yeats continued to take considerable critical interest in Tagore's work all his life and that his later play *The Heron's Egg* (1939), derives much of its Irish plot from Tagore's *The King of the Dark Chamber*. This is corroborated by one of Yeats' own letters to Tagore in 1931. "I therefore want to tell you that I am still your most loyal student and admirer." In conclusion I should like to agree with Professor Guha that Yeats brought himself 'by intelligent study to a point where he could understand western culture in terms of the East, and eastern in terms of the West. Some of his poetic power must derive from this largeness of vision which came from his particular exploration of Indian thought in depth.' (p. 140),

REFERENCES

1. *Autobiographies*, P. 246.
2. *Vide W.B. Yeats : An Indian Approach*—Naresh Guha, Jadavpur, 1968.
3. 'Oriental and Celtic Element in the Poetry of W. B. Yeats' by Dr. F.F. Farag in *W.B. Yeats 1865-1965*. Ed. Maxwell & Bushrui, (Ibadan).

4. See Vol.V, P.154 ; Vol. VI, PP. 484-487 ; PP. 750-756.
5. *English Thought : The Theological Aspect 183 -1900* by L. E. Elliott-Binns, P. 328-Longmans (1956).
6. *Explorations* P. 368.
7. *Letters of J.R. Green* P. 80, quoted by Elliott-Binns, Op. cit PP. 226-227.
8. See Fry's essay in *An Honoured Guest* Ed. Denoghue & Malryne. Edward Arnolds (1965).
9. This seems to be the view of Dr. B. Chatterjee in *the Poetry of W.B. Yeats* Longmans (1962). See P. 71. I have read Dr. Chatterjee's book only after the completion of this essay. Professor Chatterjee has not however made any claim on the Influence of Indian thought as a possible source of Yeatsian vitality and as such his book is outside the purview of this essay.
10. Quoted by Yeats in his *Autobiographies*, P. 318.
11. The phrase also occurs in Professor Jeffares's book on *Yeats : Man And Poets*. P 32 (Paper Back)
12. *Autobiographies*, P.249 MacMillan (1955).
13. *Rabindra Nath Tagore & W. B. Yeats* Ed. R.K. Dasgupta, University of Delhi (1965).
14. *W.B. Yeats : A Critical Introduction*—P.152.
15. Op. Cit.

